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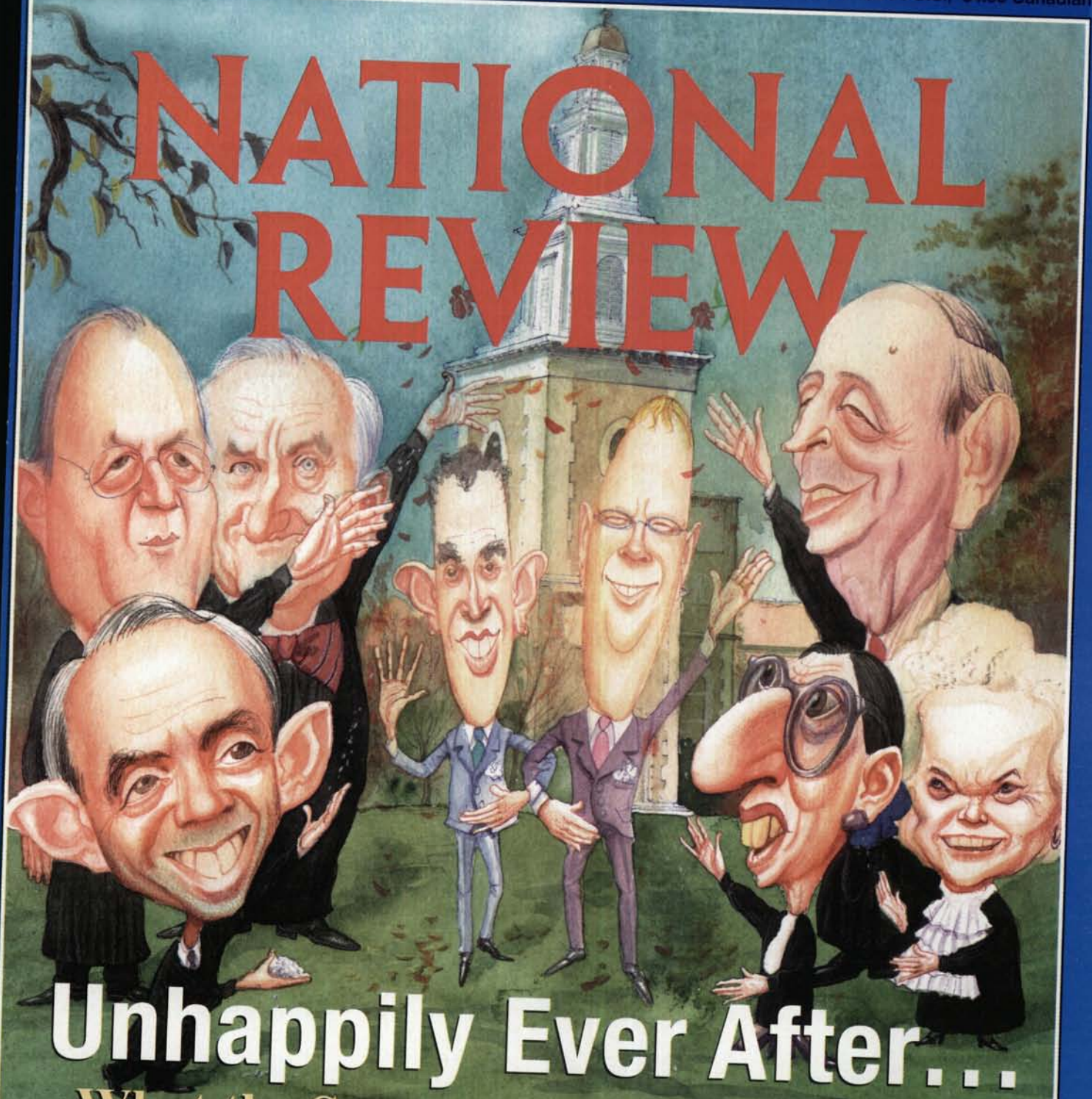

Unhappily Ever After...

What the Supreme Court has wrought

RAMESH PONNURU • GERARD V. BRADLEY

PLUS: Adam Garfinkle on THE CONTINUING CHALLENGE IN IRAQ

Michael Knox Beran on THE TWO EUROPES, and how they came to be

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The Next Battle: Manufacturing Jobs

All Manufacturing Jobs NOT Seasonally Adjusted 1,000 of jobs	May, '03	Jan. '01	Job Growth/Decline #	%
New Hampshire	82.1	103.6	(21.5)	-20.8%
District of Columbia	2.8	3.5	(0.7)	-20.0%
Massachusetts	333.2	407.8	(74.6)	-18.3%
Vermont	38.4	46.7	(8.3)	-17.8%
Washington	265.6	321.7	(56.1)	-17.4%
Colorado	156.0	188.2	(32.2)	-17.1%
Maine	64.1	77.2	(13.1)	-17.0%
North Carolina	615.6	741.1	(125.5)	-16.9%
Arizona	174.7	208.6	(33.9)	-16.3%
Oklahoma	148.7	174.5	(25.8)	-14.8%
South Carolina	279.6	327.7	(48.1)	-14.7%
New York	622.0	728.8	(106.8)	-14.7%
Wyoming	8.8	10.3	(1.5)	-14.6%
Rhode Island	60.7	71.0	(10.3)	-14.5%
Pennsylvania	728.9	849.7	(120.8)	-14.2%
Mississippi	181.1	211.1	(30.0)	-14.2%
California	1,584.8	1,844.7	(259.9)	-14.1%
Alaska*	8.9	10.3	(1.4)	-13.6%
Georgia	448.1	517.1	(69.0)	-13.3%
US Totals	**14,727**	**16,993**	**(2,266)**	**-13.3%**
Idaho	60.6	69.8	(9.2)	-13.2%
Ohio	862.9	992.2	(129.3)	-13.0%
Texas	918.5	1,055.4	(136.9)	-13.0%
New Jersey	358.1	411.3	(53.2)	-12.9%
Virginia	308.4	354.1	(45.7)	-12.9%
Illinois	735.7	842.7	(107.0)	-12.7%
South Dakota	37.5	42.9	(5.4)	-12.6%
Oregon	192.3	219.9	(27.6)	-12.6%
Montana	18.9	21.6	(2.7)	-12.5%
Connecticut	204.6	233.7	(29.1)	-12.5%
Michigan	737.9	842.8	(104.9)	-12.4%
New Mexico	36.4	41.5	(5.1)	-12.3%
Tennessee	415.9	473.0	(57.1)	-12.1%
Florida	392.9	445.6	(52.7)	-11.8%
Utah	111.1	125.3	(14.2)	-11.3%
Minnesota	345.5	389.0	(43.5)	-11.2%
Missouri	313.2	352.6	(39.4)	-11.2%
Alabama	296.7	333.8	(37.1)	-11.1%
Kentucky	268.9	302.0	(33.1)	-11.0%
Arkansas	209.5	235.0	(25.5)	-10.9%
West Virginia	65.9	73.9	(8.0)	-10.8%
Wisconsin	516.1	577.0	(60.9)	-10.6%
Louisiana	157.1	175.0	(17.9)	-10.2%
Maryland	153.8	170.3	(16.5)	-9.7%
Kansas	178.0	196.9	(18.9)	-9.6%
Iowa	222.3	245.6	(23.3)	-9.5%
Indiana	579.7	633.4	(53.7)	-8.5%
Hawaii	15.2	16.6	(1.4)	-8.4%
Delaware	34.8	37.9	(3.1)	-8.2%
Nebraska	104.7	112.9	(8.2)	-7.3%
Nevada	42.6	43.8	(1.2)	-2.7%
North Dakota	23.2	23.7	(0.5)	-2.1%

*Unadjusted January data are misleading in Alaska; change is from May, 2001.

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JULY 28, 2003 VOL. LV, NO. 14

NATIONAL REVIEW

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■ COVER STORY

Coming Out Ahead

For social conservatives, it seems that the battle over gay rights is nearing an end before it has even fairly begun. It is true that a small majority of the American public continues to believe that "sexual relations between two adults of the same sex" are "always wrong." But the trend lines favor gay marriage. *By Ramesh Ponnuru*

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COVER: *Roman Genn*

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for the record

■ In Fox News poll, President **Bush** earns 60 percent job-approval rating. . . . Bush on school choice: "We cannot have a two-tiered education system in America: one for those who can afford a certain type of school and one tier for those who can't." . . . Bush, in Miami: "Under the current leadership in Cuba, there will never be freedom. We believe freedom is the future of every country. We believe in a free Cuba." . . . **Donald Rumsfeld**: "Our first attempt at a governing charter, the Articles of Confederation, failed, in a sense. It took eight years before the Founders finally adopted our Constitution and inaugurated our first president. That history is worth remembering as we consider the difficulties that the Afghans and the Iraqis face today. The transition to democracy is never easy." . . . Cato Institute president **Ed Crane** on Bush, in *New York Times*: "His fiscal record is appalling—spending is out of control. The fiscal record of the Bush administration makes [Bill] **Clinton** look downright responsible." . . . Unemployment rate hits 6.4 percent, a 9-year high.

■ **Howard Dean** raises more second-quarter funds than any other Democratic presidential candidate. . . . Former **Gore** campaign manager **Donna Brazile** on Dean, on CNN: "I think he is the hottest thing right now in the Democratic primary." . . . **Al From** and **Bruce Reed** of Democratic Leadership Council, in *Los Angeles Times*: "'The Democratic wing of the Democratic Party,' as former Vermont governor Howard Dean likes to call it, is an aberration, a modern-day version of the old **McGovern** wing of the party, defined principally by weakness abroad and elitist interest-group liberalism at home." . . . Sen. **John McCain** (R., Ariz.) on Sen. **John Kerry** (D., Mass.), in *Boston Herald*: "He's smart, he's tough, and he's experienced. He has the capability." . . . Sen. **John Edwards** (D., N.C.) on Bush, in Raleigh *News & Observer*: "We have to show this president as the absolute phony he is. He is a phony through and through." . . . **Steve Forbes** predicts Rep. **Dick Gephardt** (D., Mo.) will win Democratic nomination.

■ Sen. **Arlen Specter** (R., Pa.) says in Lehigh Valley *Express-Times* he won't debate primary challenger Rep. **Pat Toomey** (R., Pa.) more than once: "I'm the incumbent and I won't give him any more exposure than tradition allows." . . . Rep. **Tom Davis** (R., Va.) proposes expanding House of Representatives by two seats, with one going to D.C. and the other determined by population formula that would currently benefit Utah.

■ In CNN/*USA Today* poll, only 24 percent approve of Supreme Court's latest rulings on racial preferences and 40 percent agree with sodomy decision. . . . **Lynne Cheney** on sodomy ruling, on CNN: "It seemed to me to be exactly the right decision. I've been a conservative for a pretty long time, and it's always seemed to me to be a stretch, the idea that somehow government has any business in bedrooms." . . . Senate majority leader **Bill Frist** on constitutional amemdment banning gay marriage, on ABC: "I very much feel that marriage is a sacrament . . . between a man and a woman. So I would support the amendment."

■ Potential California gubernatorial candidate **Arnold Schwarzenegger** on upcoming trip to Iraq, on *Tonight Show*: "Imagine the blackouts. There's no money, no leadership. It's pretty much like California."

"In all fairness, some of these are sort of counter-intuitive."

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THE WEEK

■ And we've always been told that the Kennedy women are *different*.

■ Howard Dean already had won the hearts of many Democrats, but now he has won their money as well. He led the pack in the second-quarter fundraising race, with $7 million. Karl Rove joked that he was rooting for Dean. The conventional wisdom, which we see no reason to doubt, is that Dean is the least electable of the Democrats' potential nominees; and that his gravitational force will pull the rest of the Democratic field to unelectability as well. Maybe the Democrats' sour, rejectionist mood will work to conservatives' advantage. But maybe not. The landslides of 1972 and 1984 did not accomplish much for conservatism. Moreover, political movements that take over parties can achieve a lot even if they do not win their first election. And in general, the country is better off when both its major parties are inhabiting the real world. The Dean moment is nothing for conservatives to celebrate.

■ Barbara Boxer, the California senator, appreciates having John Kerry and Wesley Clark as presidential prospects. Why? Because "they know what war is, [and] they are going to give us a real interesting contrast [to] this president who likes to go to war but never went to war." That statement is so awful on so many levels, it makes the head spin. But take just this business of *liking to go to war*. No, Ms. Boxer: George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, NATIONAL REVIEW, etc., do not like going to war. In fact, we hate doing so. It's just that we are willing to do so when the lives and well-being of our citizens are at stake. And what, incidentally, would you, Ms. Boxer, do to protect Americans in this new and daunting age? Or don't Democratic senators from California have to give any thought to such mundane matters?

■ In June, Justice Anthony Kennedy, writing for the Supreme Court, discovered that the Constitution protects liberty in both its "spatial" and its "more transcendent" dimensions, and one or the other of these dimensions covers sodomy. When states prohibited sodomy, as almost all of them did in the past, they were violating the Constitution. Kennedy's decision is an embarrassing mess. As Justice Scalia observed in a typically brilliant and pointed dissent, Kennedy has flip-flopped (the campaign-debate terminology is entirely appropriate here) on the role of precedent. When he wanted to preserve the judicially-invented abortion right, he claimed that the Court had to stick to its position because that position was under fire. Now that he wants to create a right to sodomy that the Court had refused to recognize, he says that widespread criticism is a reason for the Court to change its mind. One of the critics to which Kennedy listens is, ominously, the European Court of Human Rights, that well-known authority on the U.S. Constitution. Kennedy's federalism turns out to be as much a sham as his concern for legal

Anti-preferences warrior Ward Connerly, Michigan-bound

ROMAN GENN

stability: A branch of the federal government has just told the states that they cannot enact the laws they prefer, and without any obvious constitutional warrant for the edict. And the reasoning of the opinion is gratuitously sloppy. Kennedy insists that the right he is creating is a right to engage in sexual relationships rather than to engage in sex. But what possible difference would this make? Presumably Kennedy is not suggesting that states can prosecute one-night stands. You don't have to support laws banning sodomy—we do not—to see that the Court has committed an offense against self-government. This is not the first time it has done so in the campaign for social liberalism. It will not be the last, either, if the political branches do not restrain it.

■ The Court's affirmative-action decision, too, was profoundly discouraging. The Supremes were willing to ignore the letter of the law Congress wrote in order to allow racial discrimination. Leave it to Ward Connerly, the anti-preference crusader, to find a lone bright spot: The Court did not actually require state universities to discriminate. Connerly wants to get Michigan voters to ban racial preferences by referendum. If past is prologue, Republicans in the state will run away from him if they do not run against him. But with enough funding, he will get the initiative on the ballot; and the case against racial preferences has always triumphed at the polls when it

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THE "ROAD MAP"

Will it lead to peace or to devastating war?

The United States, the United Nations, the European Union, and Russia – labeled, collectively, the "Quartet" – have devised a plan called the "Road Map." The Road Map attempts to bring about peace in Israel/Palestine over a three-year period. At the end of that period, the emergence of a Palestinian state is envisioned, a state that is expected to live alongside of Israel in "peace and security."

What are the facts?

Unfriendly promoters. Of the four promoters of the Road Map, only one – the United States – can be considered friendly to and supportive of Israel. In the European Union, the centuries-old virus of anti-Semitism has again reared its ugly head, now disguised as anti-Israelism or anti-Zionism. Russia has always been hostile to Israel and has been an enthusiastic supplier of weapons to the enemies of the Jewish State since its creation. The UN seems to take up most of its time in condemnation of Israel and in discriminating against it, to such an extent that Israel is the only country that is ineligible to become a member of the Security Council.

It is likely, therefore, that the interests of three of the four designers of the Road Map are not in promoting peace, but, hypocritically, rather in the destruction of Israel or at least in its not surviving as a Jewish State.

Palestinian State: a new and unwarranted idea. The idea that the so-called "Palestinians" should have their own state has now been accepted as a just and desirable goal by most of the world. Sad to say, our own president has bought into this concept. One must regretfully assume that he did so mostly in order to appease our "Arab friends," who are outraged about our waging war against Iraq. It buys into the myth that the Israeli-Arab dispute is at the heart of the endemic conflicts in the area and that forcing Israel to "take risks for peace" is a means of assuaging Arab humiliation. But should the safety of Israel, America's only true and reliable ally in that part of the world, be jeopardized or sacrificed on the illusive altar of "Arab friendship?" A Palestinian state did not occur to anybody (even to the "Palestinians" themselves), when the Ottomans were the rulers in the land, when Great Britain had the Palestine Mandate, or when Jordan was in occupation of the "West Bank" for nineteen years after Israel's War of Independence in 1948. The concept of a Palestinian state did not arise until after the Six-Day War of 1967, in which Israel was victorious, wrested the "West Bank" from Jordan, the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and has been in administration of those territories since.

> "The solution: Total autonomy for Israel's Arab minority, within Israel, the Jewish State – a reward to which so many minorities in the world have aspired, but which has been granted to only a very few."

Israel is a tiny country, a sliver on the Mediterranean coast. It is even now in a strategically almost impossible position. Without the "depth" of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and without full control of the Jordan Valley it would be utterly indefensible. Israeli generals know that and American generals know that. And, of course, Arab generals know that also. But Israel needs to be able to defend itself, because all of its immediate neighbors – Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon – no matter what they may be saying for public consumption, have only one primary military and foreign policy objective and that is to destroy Israel, to drive the hated Jews into the sea, and to finish what they call the "Zionist Enterprise" once and for all. To believe that the "Palestinians," once they had their own state, would be peaceful neighbors of a truncated and mortally vulnerable Israel or that the other Arabs states and Iran would turn from wolves to lambs is to either engage in wishful thinking or quite deliberately be co-conspirators in the eventual destruction of the Jewish State.

The Road Map will inevitably go the way that other previous "peace plans" have gone – all of which demanded "sacrifices for peace" from Israel, yielding large chunks of territory for only empty words from the Arabs. But even if Israel, tired from decades of bloodletting and under unbearable pressure from the "international community," would acquiesce to such a suicidal path, the "Palestinians" would not allow it to happen. Their hatred of the Jews and the inculcation of their children to die as martyrs are such that they would be unable and unwilling to stop the terror that they have visited upon the Holy Land. Another bloody war, rather than peace, is the likely outcome of the Road Map. What is the "solution" that so far has eluded everybody? It is what Israel has always been willing to grant: total autonomy for its Arab minority within Israel, the Jewish State. It is a reward to which so many minorities in the world have aspired, but which has been granted to only a very few.

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was fairly worded. If legal and political elites will not obey the law, the people will have to correct them.

■ In early July, a federal appeals court ordered the chief justice of the Alabama supreme court, Roy S. Moore, to take down a large granite monument bearing the Ten Commandments which he had erected in the rotunda of the Alabama State Judicial Building. Following the decision, Moore's lawyer told reporters his client would be appealing to the Supreme Court in Washington, adding that Moore "believes that what he is doing is not only constitutional but required by his oath of office." Justice Moore is living in another age; otherwise he surely would have noticed that only one Commandment is still permitted public reverence in 2003 America: No Smoking.

■ The accounting scandals of 2002 have faded from the news, but they are still being used to advance various agendas. Sen. Kennedy, the Communications Workers of America, Verizon, and others are trying to keep MCI from getting federal contracts. Their ostensible reason is that the company, in its earlier incarnation as WorldCom, committed fraud. But the perpetrators of the fraud are being punished. The entire board of directors has been replaced, the company has cooperated with investigators, and corporate officials involved in misconduct have been fired. We suspect that a pure concern for justice is not Verizon's only motive in this matter. It may also bear noting that MCI's employees voted against the union's efforts to organize them several years ago. The CWA represents workers at some of MCI's largest rivals. The government ought to award contracts on the basis of value for taxpayers, and not join the axe-grinders union.

The recall gambit will probably not bring conservative governance to California.

The campaign to recall California governor Gray Davis from office appears to have succeeded in getting enough petition signatures to get on the ballot—although just when it will be voted on remains the subject of political intrigue. We were opposed to the procedural irregularity of forcing a recall vote. Some of its supporters have in recent weeks suggested that the recall is going to become a normal tool of California politics, which is not reassuring. But if there is going to be, in effect, a new gubernatorial election, conservatives should support the rightmost viable candidate. At the moment, it is impossible to decide who that is. In any event, the recall gambit will probably not bring conservative governance to California. Dianne Feinstein could well replace Davis. But even in that case, the recall, however bad a precedent it sets, would have achieved something: replacing a passive and corrupt governor with a potentially better steward.

JASON KIRK/GETTY

■ It may be gratifying to see crowds in foreign streets waving American flags and urging American soldiers to come, as they do in the moonscape of Monrovia, the blasted non-functioning capital of Liberia. The West African nation has been prey to years of bloodshed and slaughter under sieges from competing warlords. The worst of the lot has been Charles Taylor, the Qaddafi-trained thug whose forces of coked-up boys specialize in rape, cannibalism, and mutilation. Taylor, battening off the diamond trade, supported insurgents in neighboring Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast. But now a U.N.-backed court has indicted Taylor for war crimes, and insurgents backed by his enraged neighbors are poised to bring him low. Nigeria has offered Taylor asylum (African leaders cannot be prosecuted; who knows where that would end?). If Taylor goes, President Bush will likely send in an American peacekeeping force. He should consider the move carefully. Sheer pity, and America's tenuous connection to Liberia—founded by freed slaves—argue for it. The lack of any compelling national interest and the difficulties posed by local tribalism and greed argue strongly against. The most compelling factor of all is the condition of our armed forces. We have chosen to fight a war on terror with a peacetime army. Perhaps we can police the Middle East with such a force structure. But Africa as well?

■ Hong Kong was handed over from British to Chinese sovereignty in July 1997 under a document referred to by everyone as "The Basic Law." Article 23 of that document charges the Hong Kong government with enacting legislation covering "treason, secession, sedition, [and] subversion" against the People's Republic. Attempts by the territory's chief executive Tung Chee-hwa, a Beijing place-man, to pass such legislation have been stymied by massive public demonstrations and a key defection from his ruling Executive Council. Tung's opponents say that the proposed laws are far too broad and repressive and look suspiciously as though they were dictated by the Chinese Communist party. The cratering of Hong Kong's economy and government mishandling of the recent SARS epidemic have added to public discontent. With little choice in the matter, Tung has deferred action on the new laws. This is a victory for public opinion in Hong Kong, and an encouraging sign that the territory can function as a representative democracy. Beijing has not yet responded to Tung's retreat, however, and it is generally assumed that the Communists must be furious. At such a critical point, a strong statement of support from the U.S. government for the people of Hong Kong would be welcome. At the time of going to press, only some limp State Department boilerplate was forthcoming. There are few places more in need of liberty and constitutional government than China; and there is no better way to advance that task than by loud, clear support for Chinese democracy where it has already put down roots, in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Let us hear the administration's voice on this.

■ At least one part of the defense budget will be going down, not up. On July 1, the United States suspended $47 million in military aid to 35 countries that have ignored a request to grant immunity to U.S. citizens in International Criminal Court proceedings. That's not a lot of cash—to us or to them—but the cuts do send a clear signal that our government considers the

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ICC a potential enemy of American national-security interests. They also put the lie to the claim that countries like Latvia, which have supported the Iraq war, take their marching orders from Washington. The problem, however, is that the suspension of aid doesn't appear to be working—the ICC is gaining adherents, not losing them. Which means further actions to undermine it now will be necessary.

■ BERLUSCONI'S NAZI REMARK ROCKS EU MEETING. That was the AP headline for a July 3 article. Fact: In a rhetorical spat with a German legislator, Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi remarked that his critic ought to try out for the role of a Nazi concentration-camp guard in a forthcoming movie. Fact: Bad taste. Fact: Howls of indignation swept through the chamber and echoed in the media. Fact: Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany instantly demanded an apology. Fact: Signor Berlusconi is not the most popular man in the EU crowd, having backed the Iraq war and, on top of that, being a conservative free-market politician. Fact: Berlusconi apologized (sort of). Fact: When one of Schroeder's cabinet ministers compared President Bush to Hitler, this excited little outrage, and at long last the chancellor apologized. Fact: Nobody was really outraged by Berlusconi. They all enjoyed every minute of the "uproar."

■ Sabine Herold is hoping to save France from itself. This 21-year-old student has burst onto the Paris scene calling herself a libertarian and a conservative—it doesn't hurt her cause that she is extremely pretty (those eyelashes!) and sophisticated. In the middle of the Iraq war, she and some friends demonstrated outside the American embassy in support of President Bush. In her opinion, the French are anti-American out of injured pride that France is no longer the dominant nation it once was. Even more courageously, she has stood on the steps of the city hall to deliver an impassioned speech against the trade unions and the strikes that have been making life in France a misery these past weeks. The unions are out to protect their privileges, she says, and it's time for someone to mobilize people and defeat what she calls these "reactionary egotists." Joan of Arc, Brigitte Bardot, and Mrs. Thatcher all in one, now that's a new role model.

■ The Jihad Mosque in Hebron has a soccer club—and it isn't your average soccer club, as would befit any institution called the Jihad Mosque. The boys double as murderers. In fact, two of them recently disguised themselves as yeshiva students, infiltrated themselves into a Jewish community, and killed two people. *Goal!* This puts us in mind of another illustrious soccer squad, the Mandela United Football Club. You remember them, don't you? They were the ones who murdered young Stompie Moeketsi when he refused to cooperate in one of Winnie's criminal schemes. NATIONAL REVIEW hereby proposes a match between the Jihad Mosque squad and Winnie's finest. Imagine the soccer moms who would line either side of the field—so proud.

■ Maurice Papon has made the history books for several reasons. First, because Nazi wartime documents praise his diligence as an official of the Vichy collaborationist regime deporting Jews to be murdered. Second, because he is one of the very few Vichy officials ever sent to jail for their role in this mass murder. (It took the French 52 years to bring Papon to justice, and during that time he became a government minister. Sentenced to ten years, he served 35 months before the lawyers had him out in 2002.) And now, third, because the French authorities have reinstated his pension, with arrears. Dominique Perben, the minister of justice, wasn't happy when Papon was released and isn't happy now about this example of French justice. His thoughts, he claims, are with Papon's victims. How unusually considerate of this exceptional minister to remember them.

■ British prime minister Tony Blair leads a party of the left, but has governed largely from the center-right. The iron laws of politics dictate that in these circumstances, left-wing legislators must be allowed to vent their frustrations on "social" issues of no economic or diplomatic importance. In this spirit, the House of Commons has passed a law to ban fox hunting, a pastime hated by British leftists for reasons of class resentment—Oscar Wilde's "the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable." When finally effected—there are parliamentary fences still to be jumped—the ban will be fatal to Britain's fox population. Foxes are a considerable nuisance to farmers. They have formerly been allowed to live and breed in order to provide sport for the huntsmen. Now they will be swiftly exterminated by gassing and shooting, rendering the ban irreversible. Thus will end a British tradition stretching back to at least the Middle Ages, notably celebrated by the novelist Robert Surtees, the poet John Masefield, and in our own time by the conservative philosopher Roger Scruton (author of a book about the sport, *On Hunting*). One can understand Mr. Blair's priorities, but it is sad to see a colorful aspect of British life yield to class warfare and misguided sentimentality.

■ Michael Ingham, bishop of Vancouver, became the first bishop in the Anglican Communion to bless homosexual unions. In response, 15 of Anglicanism's 38 primates have suspended or severed relations with his diocese, calling his action "a defining moment" on the road to schism. Press accounts noted that the flocks of the angry bishops accounted for 38 million Anglicans

ON THE RUNWAYS

From London to Milan, tough guys
In cowboy hats and denim thighs
Or pricey battle jackets, strut,
Eyes glazed like deer when in the rut
(In fashion, all roads lead to bed).
Of course, Old Europe still sees red
When Bush's name comes up; but he—
Hats, boots—suggests security.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. What percentage is that of the church worldwide? The most recent standard reference work, the *World Christian Encyclopedia* (2001), counts 80 million Anglicans. But this includes 26 million Anglicans in Europe, most of them in England. The vast majority of English Anglicans, however, spend Sundays anywhere but in church. The fervor in Anglicanism is in the Third World—the very dioceses that balked at Bishop Ingham. If it comes to schism, who will be leaving whom? One member of a hated 19th-century British ministry was asked whether, when leaving office, his colleagues could have fit in a single carriage. No, he replied, we should have filled two.

■ A former Bond girl has been ordained a priest of the Anglican Communion. Shannon Ledbetter, 39, who appeared in a sexy outfit in the 1997 film *Tomorrow Never Dies*, will become vicar of Knowsley, a small town in northwest England. Church authorities did not say, explicitly, that her ordination was part of a new Anglican outreach program to heterosexuals; but such an initiative is in fact long overdue.

■ Sing, O Goddess, of the wrath of Zeus . . . The Lord of Thunder is of course a staunch conservative, and has recently been expressing angry disapproval of certain aspects of the modern world. Item: The Greek government has called on that country's shepherds to abandon their new metal crooks and return to the traditional wooden ones, after three shepherds were killed by lightning in a single week. Item: A young Englishwoman vacationing in Greece narrowly escaped death when her tongue stud was struck by lightning. She was badly blistered, temporarily blinded, and rendered mute for three days. A commentator in the British press noted that, considering what other parts of their bodies young people decorate with metal piercings nowadays, Miss Becky Nyang got off lightly.

■ New Jersey is now without a poet laureate. It abolished the position when, for some reason, it couldn't get rid of the bard who held it, Amiri Baraka (né LeRoi Jones). Here is a taste of Mr. Baraka's work: "Who knew the World Trade Center was gonna get bombed / Who told 4,000 Israeli workers at the Twin Towers to stay home that day / Why did Sharon stay away?" New Jersey will not have to do without such genius as that—it just won't be official. Which brings up a larger question: What did the State of New Jersey think it was doing when it designated this flake, hater, and mediocrity poet laureate? Did it think it was flattering black people? If so, the act was as misbegotten as it was insulting.

■ Asked who wore the pants in the Thatcher household, Denis Thatcher, husband of Margaret, answered, "I do. And I wash and iron them, too." It was vintage Denis Thatcher: blunt, funny, realistic, and expressing his devotion to the wife he loved and supported for 51 years. In the 24/7 media world, the retired oil executive became an object of public scrutiny, the supposed author of a series of Colonel Blimp-ish letters in the British humor magazine *Private Eye*. He was never responsible for putting himself forward, however. He was the model political spouse, discreet and dignified. Americans, who have suffered through a quarter century of bad political wives, could learn from him; so could feminists, who give no credit to the husband of the first woman prime minister of Great Britain. He died at 88, after a brief illness. R.I.P. Our prayers are with his widow.

POLITICS

Left Turn

THE news this summer has been rather bleak for conservatives. The Supreme Court first decided to write "diversity" into the Constitution. A few days later, it issued a ruling on sodomy laws that called into question its willingness to tolerate any state laws based on traditional understandings of sexual morality. In neither case was there much pretense that the Court was merely following the law. At this point it takes real blindness to deny that the Court rules us and, on emotionally charged policy issues, rules us in accord with liberal sensibilities. And while the Court issued its edicts and the rest of the world adjusted, a huge prescription-drug bill made its way through Congress. That bill will add at least $400 billion to federal spending over the next ten years, and it comes on top of already gargantuan spending increases over the last five years. The fact that a pro-growth tax cut is going into effect this summer hardly compensates for these developments—especially since expanding entitlements threaten to exert upward pressure on tax rates in the future.

Republicans have been complicit in each of these debacles. Both the affirmative-action and sodomy decisions were written by Reagan appointees. President Bush actually cheered the affirmative-action decision for recognizing the value of "diversity." Bush has requested spending increases, and not just for defense and homeland security. He has failed to veto spending increases that went beyond his requests. But let it not be said that the president has led his party astray. Many congressional Republicans have strayed even more enthusiastically. Bush originally wanted to condition prescription-drug benefits on seniors' joining reformed, less expensive health plans. When the idea was raised, House Speaker Denny Hastert called it "inhumane." Congressional appropriators—the people who write the spending bills—have been known to boast that they would beat the president if ever he dared to veto one of their products.

We have never been under any illusions about the extent of Bush's conservatism. He did not run in 2000 as a small-government conservative, or as someone who relished ideological combat on such issues as racial preferences and immigration. We supported him nonetheless in the hope that he would strengthen our defense posture, appoint originalist judges, liberalize trade, reduce tax rates, reform entitlements, take modest steps toward school choice. Progress on these fronts would be worth backsliding elsewhere. We have been largely impressed with Bush's record on national security, on judicial appointments (although the big test of a Supreme Court vacancy will

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A Rare Opportunity for Postal Reform

Rick Geddes is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and is an assistant professor in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University.

The commission President Bush established to analyze the workings of the U.S. Postal Service will issue its recommendations for reform on July 31. This is the first such presidential commission since the Johnson administration, and it is long overdue. The need for reform is critical because the Postal Service's revenue base is eroding rapidly; the institution is a train wreck waiting to happen.

Last year, for the first time in recent history, the volume of first-class mail—which constitutes more than 57 percent of the Postal Service's revenue—actually declined. Standard mail dropped even more precipitously. Not surprisingly, the Postal Service's financial condition has suffered. Its net loss in 2002 was $700 million, on top of a $1.7 billion loss in 2001.

The Postal Service needs to undergo a major restructuring. If such restructuring is not implemented, the system will become more dysfunctional and more difficult to overhaul in the future. The president's commission enjoys the rare opportunity to save the Postal Service before it implodes.

Increasing rates will not solve the problem but rather encourage the use of substitutes for mail, such as e-mail, phones, and faxes. Nor is enhanced commercial freedom for the Postal Service a viable alternative, as such freedom would only encourage it to push its monopoly power, tax-exempt status, and other government-granted privileges into competitive markets, thus unfairly competing with private rivals.

More fundamental change is needed. Fortunately, many countries have undertaken postal reform, providing valuable guidance for the United States. Those initiatives suggest that three key changes are required for successful reform: (1)limitations on or elimination of the postal monopoly, (2)full-scale privatization, or (3)both.

Many countries have limited or eliminated their postal monopolies, creating substantial benefits for consumers and simultaneously improving the performance of their postal services. New Zealand, for example, eliminated its postal monopoly in 1998, allowing full competition for letter delivery. As a result, New Zealand Post has *reduced* its basic stamp price and maintained profitability. Australia limited its letter delivery monopoly in 1989. Its basic postage rate has remained the same for more than eight years. Australia Post has earned profits for more than a decade, and on-time delivery has increased.

The main argument against repealing the postal monopoly is that service to rural customers will somehow suffer, but neither New Zealand nor Australia has experienced problems with rural delivery. Numerous other countries have limited their postal monopolies, yielding similar benefits.

Other countries have undertaken privatization. Germany's Deutsche Post has had several successful public offerings (but remains primarily government owned). The post office in Holland, TPG, is now a predominantly privately owned, publicly traded company. The effects in both countries have been positive. Because there is an explicit group to which they are accountable, both companies are more innovative, competing aggressively for business and offering their customers new products and services.

No entity would benefit more from repeal of its monopoly than the U.S. Postal Service itself. Combined with government ownership, its monopoly status eliminates its incentive to improve its service and opens it up to political interference. Unless its structure is changed, it is unlikely that the Postal Service will evolve on its own. The president's commission has the opportunity to make that happen.

—Rick Geddes

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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apparently not occur during this term), and on taxes. On the other issues he has so far been unable to deliver.

It is not Bush's fault that Democrats oppose entitlement reform, or that the public wants it less than it wants a new entitlement to prescription drugs. He should, however, have used the veto more effectively to restrain spending. Had he vetoed the farm bill, for example, Congress would have sent him a better one. We need presidential leadership on issues other than war and taxes. Instead we are getting the first full presidential term to go without a veto since John Quincy Adams. Bush's advisers may worry that for Bush to veto the bills of a Republican Congress would muddle party distinctions for voters. But this dilemma results from a failure of imagination. Why must the House Republican leadership always maintain control of the floor? When Democrats and liberal Republicans have the votes to pass a bill, sometimes it would be better to let them do so, and then have the president veto it. The alternative—cobbling together some lite version of a liberal bill in order to eke out a congressional majority—is what really makes it hard to press the case against big-spending Democrats.

The defeats on racial preferences, gay rights, and the role of the courts generally reflect a conservative political failure that predates this administration. Republican politicians have never been comfortable talking about moral or race-related issues, and have been eager to slough off these responsibilities to the courts. Their silence is not, however, only an abdication of responsibility; it is also politically foolish. Opposition to racial preferences and gay marriage is popular in every state of the Union. And if the courts are going to block social conservatives from ever achieving legislative victories—and Republicans will not even try to do anything about it—social conservatives may well conclude that there is no point to participating in normal politics. There goes the Republican majority.

We need presidential leadership on issues other than war and taxes. Instead we are getting the first full presidential term to go without a veto since John Quincy Adams.

To get back on track will require effort from President Bush, congressional Republicans, and conservatives generally. Bush ought to bear down on spending; we suggest that an assault on corporate welfare, followed by a reform of the appropriations process, would be a fine start. Republicans need a strategy for dealing with the judicial usurpation of politics that goes beyond trying to make good appointments to the bench—a strategy that now has a two-generation track record of nearly unrelieved failure. On gay marriage, a constitutional amendment appears to be necessary to forestall the mischief of state and federal courts. But a mere statute can make the point that Congress controls the federal judiciary's purview. Congressman Todd Akin's bill to strip the federal judiciary of jurisdiction over the Pledge of Allegiance has the votes to pass the House, and has a powerful Senate sponsor in Judiciary Committee chairman Orrin Hatch. It should be high on the Republican agenda.

Conservatives, finally, have to find ways to work with the Republicans—their fortunes are linked—while also working *on* them. The Pennsylvania Senate primary offers a choice between a candidate who is conservative on both economics and social issues, Pat Toomey, and one who is conservative on neither, the incumbent, Arlen Specter. The White House and the party establishment has rallied behind Specter. But President Bush's goals would be better served by a Senator Toomey. And as recent events underscore, this is not a bad time for conservatives to declare their independence from the GOP establishment.

IRAQ

Postwar Is Hell

SOME soldiers are killed in pitched battles, some are murdered in public by brazen assassins. As combat deaths in Iraq have edged over 30 since April, it has become clear that the war did not end there when Saddam Hussein's statue fell.

Wars often outlast their supposed end-points. Grant and Lee met in a burst of magnanimity at Appomattox, but lynching, banditry, and other violence sputtered on for years; one of the casualties was President Lincoln, slain by a Confederate agent. How in the present case does the United States protect its soldiers, its interests, and the future of Iraq?

One great problem is restoring the nation's infrastructure. Washington underestimated the difficulties this would pose. With its oil wealth and its secularist veneer, Iraq had the face of a modern nation. But war, embargo, greed, and mismanagement had rotted it from within. As Paul Bremer, head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, told *Time*, "Saddam took 35 years to run the place down, and it's not going to take 35 days to fix it. People need to be patient. And I know that's hard when the temperature's 124 and the electricity goes off. But that's the message, and that's the only message there is."

Partly because of its own self-restrained battle tactics, the coalition confronts a sullen and still-hopeful enemy. Saddam's loyalists expect the return of their malign Bonnie Prince Charlie, encouraged by his recent supposed taped message to them. A corpse or three of Saddam and his sons would be most welcome. The diehards appear to be composed of Baathist minions, members of the formerly favored Sunni minority, criminals, and foreign jihadists. One reason for continuing casualties has been that American troops are seeking the bad guys out, patrolling Baghdad's streets and sweeping the so-called "Sunni triangle" northwest of the capital.

The diehards are targeting the Iraqi people as well as coalition troops. Iraqis working to restore the electrical grid have been murdered; seven Iraqi police cadets were killed by a bomb. The enemy chose its victims well. One of the keys to success in ensuring domestic tranquility is handing off the job to those who will most benefit by it. In the blunt language of "The Small Wars Manual," written by Marine officers in the 1930s and exhumed by author Max Boot, "native troops, supported by marines, [should be] increasingly employed as early as practicable in order that these native agencies may assume their prop-

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er responsibility for restoring law and order in their own country." The sooner Iraq moves from an American occupation, to an American occupation assisted by Iraqis, to an Iraqi regime bolstered by Americans, the better.

The ultimate target audience for enemy violence is the American public. President Bush's willingness to "bring . . . on" enemy attacks was not macho bluster, but an expression of American determination. "Make no mistake about it," Bush continued, "—and the enemy should [not] make any mistake about it—we will deal with them harshly if they continue to try to bring harm to the Iraqi people." A few well-selected words were, predictably, seized by his Democratic opponents. But a president should know that his words will be distorted, and therefore speak more tersely. Bush should say, as he has been saying all along, that the fight will be hard, and that the alternative to action is to leave ourselves vulnerable to the machinations of terrorists and their patrons. The American people understand that 9/11 marked an era in our national life. Bush must deal with them boldly and bluntly.

As it did during the push to Baghdad, the United States has been showing flexibility in Iraq. This is bad, and good. It's bad because it shows that initial assumptions were mistaken. It's good because it shows that Washington is able to learn and react. Flexibility of execution; firmness of purpose.

notes & asides

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: As one who thoroughly agrees with you that J. S. Bach is the best, I sheepishly confess that when possible amidst Saturday chores, I tune in the local "oldies" radio station. A true Boomer, I was born but five years before Elvis Presley took up the icon's mantle and led rock 'n' roll's invasion of our society, attracting legions of fans as he did so. Yet I much prefer the Beach Boys and the Beatles. Elvis's tunes, with one or two exceptions, just never quite hooked me.

But now I've encountered your *Elvis in the Morning*. It is a most imaginative work and was a pleasure to read. I was impressed by all you had read to prepare to write, and I assume that in the process you gained a substantial feel for the so-called "King."

Regarding you as one of America's true sages, I must ask some questions: What do you now think of Mr. Presley? How do you assess his character?

Yours in admiration,
James L. Fletcher Jr., M.D.
Savannah, Ga.

Dear Dr. Fletcher: 1) I think Presley was a superb and original vocalist. 2) His character was suicidally defective.

Glad you enjoyed my book.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: When a navy captain's ship runs aground (even if it is the fault of one of his junior officers), the captain will never make admiral, and probably won't get to drive his ship much longer.

The *New York Times* is aground and taking on water fast.

I submit that the only way the paper will restore any sense of credibility is for the editor to resign, or be fired by the publisher. This action would send shock waves through the nation's editorial boards (which wouldn't be such a bad thing), and it would also help to re-establish the trust which is so vital to our national press.

Christian Patte
Maj. Gen., USA-Ret'd.
Charleston, S.C.

Dear General: What if John Paul Jones had run aground in 1770? Or Nelson, 30 years later? Iron rules that appeal to the military aren't always right even for the military, and are hazardously invoked for the non-military. What I think you are saying is that what the public wanted was a little mortification from so towering a paragon of public responsibility. A little propitiation. But wasn't that an internal matter for the *Times*?

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: In the June 2 issue, in an item about Jayson Blair, NR says, "Blair, who was black, . . ." Isn't he *still* black?

Just wondering,

Barbara Richardson
Amsden, Vt.

Dear Ms. Richardson: The sense of it, in the language used, was, "Blair, given the fact that he was black, . . ." As in, "Muhammad Ali, who was black [after all], refused to sign the contract."

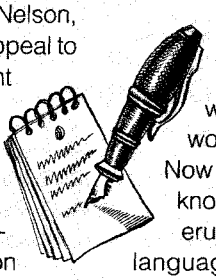
Okay?

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Can you suffer one more comment on the sprinkling of foreign words and phrases in one's writing?

Bill Sholar argued against such a practice (June 2) because it may obscure the meaning of what is being written. (He was flummoxed by the phrase *d'accord*.)

He then contradicted his entire premise by closing with *Parva leves capiunt animas*.



This sentence sent me into a frenzy of scholarly research to discover its meaning, which is "Frivolous minds are won by trifles," penned by Ovid. Now this curious mind wants to know if I can get bonus points in erudition by using two different languages together in an English phrase, such as "a frisson of Schadenfreude"?

Sincerely yours,
(Miss) Joan Mary Macey
Binghamton, N.Y.

Dear Miss Macey: If you try it, and discerning readers look on, I guarantee you lots of Schadenfreude.

Cordially,

—WFB

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CONDEMNED

Fighting Back—What did President Bush do on September 11th when he discovered that America was under terrorist attack? How did he plan the war on terror? What is his strategy? *Fighting Back* is the ultimate insider account of the Bush presidency during this unprecedented period. **Item #6076**

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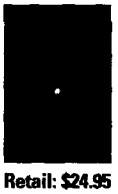

By Design—Prize winning science writer Larry Witham explains why fewer and fewer scientists are atheists, and how new research now points to the fact that life was brought about through fine-tuning by a careful planner. Witham profiles some of the courageous scientists who have dared to question science's great atheist dogma and follow the evidence of God's existence. **Item #6168**

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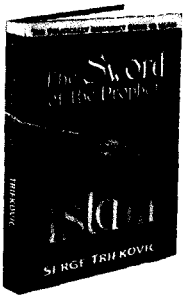

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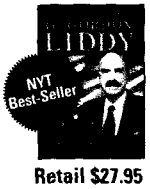

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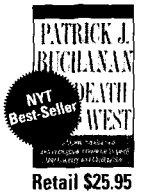

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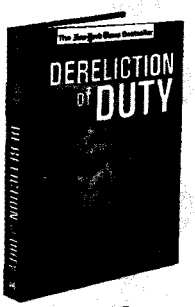

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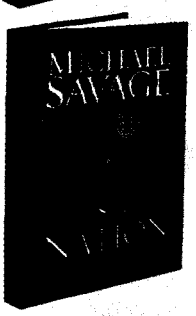

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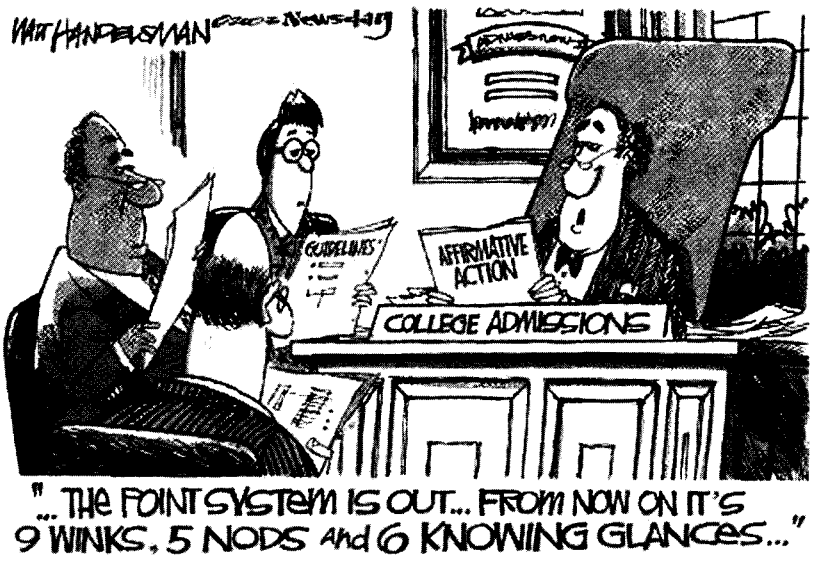
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■ PUBLIC POLICY ■

Affirmative Action Forever?

The elites have now enshrined race preferences; but will the public sit still?

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

If any single person is responsible for the Supreme Court's decision to entrench "diversity" in American life and law, it is President George W. Bush. For several years it had been clear that, despite consistent public hostility to racial preferences, and occasional legal defeats for them, elite support for preferences was so passionate that it would require determined national political leadership to defeat them. Mr. Bush repeatedly indicated that he would not provide such leadership—indeed, that he would oppose any such leadership provided by others, while himself speaking on the topic in a notably ambiguous way.

In the 2000 election campaign, he refused to endorse Proposition 209—the ballot measure outlawing preferences that California voters had already passed by an almost two-thirds majority—and kept his distance from its most famous protagonist, Ward Connerly. (Bush proposed something called "affirmative access," which no one has ever managed to define concretely.) As Texas governor he helped craft legislation that, with the help of computer projections, carefully (and arguably illegally) mimicked the racial preferences that had been outlawed by the courts. When the Michigan test-cases arrived before the Supreme Court, he rejected a Justice Department brief opposing their "diversity" justification for preferences and instead sent in one that was silent on the main issue and opposed Michigan's preferences on narrowly tailored mathematical grounds.

This prompted virtually the entire American establishment to weigh in with a brief endorsing diversity—and offered Justice Sandra Day O'Connor the evasive and dishonest compromise that was narrowly tailored to her own political needs. And when the Supreme Court rulings were sent down, Bush pronounced with memorable fuzzy-mindedness: "Today's decisions seek a careful balance between the goal of campus diversity and the fundamental principle of equal treatment under the law." That remark does not quite match Sir Boyle Roche's famous "It would surely be better to give up not only a part but, if necessary, the whole of our constitution, to preserve the remainder." But it deserves an honorable mention and a slot in Bartlett's as an example of what value politicians really place on fundamental principles.

Still, President Bush and the Republican establishment doubtless hope that the entire controversy has now ended. Case closed. Careful balance struck. Racial preferences entrenched, provided that they are sufficiently disguised as the result of "holistic" and "individualized" assessments. Diversity rules, okay? Let's move on.

Some conservatives and libertarians seem inclined to accept this advice. Tod Lindberg in the *Washington Times* and Robert A. George on Reason Online both suggest that diversity is now such a staple of corporate, economic, cultural, and political life that to continue opposing race preferences is little more than an exercise in nostalgia. Lindberg asks: "Who will now stand up to propose that a future Supreme Court reverse itself and declare that diversity is not a compelling interest of government? No one with serious political ambitions within the GOP." Others argue, with somewhat desperate optimism, that conservatives need no longer oppose preferences since Justice O'Connor's judgment placed a time limit of 25 years on them. And in addition to the Bush administration, the GOP establishment, and some quietist conservatives and libertarians, corporate America is comfortable, too. It got exactly what it asked for in its amicus brief to the Court: diversity to produce a multi-ethnic elite. Yet there are good reasons to suppose that these various hopes and calculations are all doomed to disappointment.

Corporate America in particular is in for some unpleasant surprises. Racial

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preferences in college, though they seem a shortcut to a multi-ethnic elite, actually fail that test on two grounds. First, they systematically mismatch minority talent to academic opportunities, placing the top 10 percent of designated minority students into competition with the top 1 percent of white and Asian students. Not surprisingly, a disproportionately high number of minority students then drop out—and those who remain are tempted to explain their difficulties as a result of concealed racism. Hence the classrooms of diversity are often places of resentment and division rather than of the energetic exchange of life experiences imagined by Justice O'Connor. In order to ensure that these failures do not prevent the emergence of a multi-ethnic elite, therefore, the system of race preferences has to be continued in some form or other after college.

Which leads logically to the second problem. If the new multi-ethnic elite is to be accepted in its leadership role, then Americans must feel that it is a genuine elite rooted in merit. As *The Economist* pointed out in an editorial, if the suspicion grows that this is an engineered elite, then the elite will be under permanent suspicion, resulting in widespread cynicism. Yet a system of permanent racial preferences is exactly that: the engineering of an elite. A secondary result of this, as Justice Clarence Thomas and others have noted, is that non-engineered members of the elite come under suspicion too as the probable beneficiaries of racial favoritism.

Nor do the ill effects end there. In signing on to "diversity," corporate America is likely to discover that it has signed on to a principle capable of being extended indefinitely and contrary to its own market independence and larger interests. Diversity is not necessarily confined to race. It is a catch-all name for all the considerations not covered by merit—race and gender equality, social justice, class mobility, disability rights, and so on. And whereas corporations and businesses can be generally trusted to hire, fire, and promote on merit, since merit directly assists profit maximization, they have no similar interest to direct them to implement diversity. Thus an entire corpus of anti-discrimination law, a vast federal bureaucracy, and internal colonies of the federal bureaucracy within the corporation (known as Human Resources departments) have come into being to enforce the observance of diversity in an ever-growing number of corporate decisions.

This enforcement is likely to intrude progressively on corporate management in several ways. Diversity's "protected classes" will expand from racial to economic and other categories, and diversity bureaucrats will extend their sway from hiring and promotion to how the company does its business. For example, does it take diversity into account in selecting its suppliers, or in making charitable donations, or in marketing its products? This kind of interference is already occurring, and it can sometimes come close to directing a corporation's core business decisions. William McGowan, author of *Coloring the News*, has brilliantly documented, for instance, how the quest for diversity has seriously distorted mainstream news coverage of such topics as immigration, poverty, and—yes—diversity. If the diversity principle continues unchecked, the Human Resources Department will become the most important decision-maker in the corporation, and corporate America will become an island of ethnic socialism in a free-market sea of small businesses.

Watching this Leviathan creep inexorably forward, some conservatives understandably take comfort from Justice O'Connor's suggestion that diversity should cease to be enforced in 25 years. Alas, they are deceiving themselves. O'Connor took no steps toward a time limit on diversity. She merely expressed a hope—and that hope was at variance with her justification for diversity now. If diversity benefits all races admitted to college by elevating the educational benefits they receive, why should such universal benefits be discontinued in 25 years? In 2028 another Justice O'Connor will be on hand to point out how necessary such benefits are. By that time, moreover, the direct beneficiaries of race preferences will have developed an "entitlement mentality"—

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i.e., the understandable sense that they are entitled to benefits that minorities will by then have enjoyed for over half a century. So the political support for them among minority politicians and pressure groups will be even more intense. And if the "race gap" in test scores has by then diminished—which some conservatives rely upon as the basis for thinking preferences will wither away—or remained the same, then that will be cited as evidence that race preferences should be continued on the grounds of either their success or their necessity, as the facts dictate.

Do these factors, then, mean that race preferences are here to stay, relatively unscarred by political controversy, as Tod Lindberg argues? Not at all—and for an interesting reason advanced by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She asked why race preferences should not be openly and candidly supported rather than embraced covertly in their ineffective disguise as "individualized" assessments. As several commentators, from *National Journal*'s Stuart Taylor to NR's editorialists, have pointed out, the answer to this question is damning. These disguises are essential because in every legitimate opinion poll, very large majorities of Americans—including majorities of minorities—reject race preferences. Both deception and self-deception are therefore crucial to their continuance. Race preferences are everywhere defended by a bodyguard of lies. And lies are vulnerable. They cannot withstand the light of day. Bright light, however, is about to shine on them from three directions: law, immigration, and grassroots politics.

Race preferences are everywhere defended by a bodyguard of lies. And lies are vulnerable. They cannot withstand the light of day.

Law. One of the several unexpected consequences of a judgment that sought to entrench diversity is that it has laid open college-admissions programs to legal challenges of bewildering complexity. As Peter Kirsanow of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights showed in a superbly detailed legal brief on National Review Online—a brief that should be in the hands of every grassroots activist—O'Connor's attempt to disguise racial preferences paradoxically compels colleges to ensure that their admissions standards do such things as articulate a compelling state interest, consider race-neutral alternatives, demonstrate what constitutes a "critical mass" of minorities, build in time limits for their preference programs, hire many more admissions staff, and so on. If they fail to do such things, legal challenges will stand a good chance of establishing that they are really imposing legally unacceptable "quotas" (which, of course, they are) rather than virtuously treating race and ethnicity as simply one variable in a cluster of admirable traits (by, as Michigan does, giving six times as many points for Native American ancestry as for writing a good essay).

Such challenges will be mounted. Every time that happens, there will be a controversy surrounding the case; and the politicians will be called upon to give their opinion of it. Doubtless it was a shrewd precognition of such legal complications that persuaded Justice Ginsburg that straightforwardly endorsing preferences would have aroused less opposition in the long run. And, contra Lindberg, the Supreme Court did reverse itself only a few days later in the decision invalidating Texas sodomy laws, less than two decades after it had reached the exact opposite conclusion.

Immigration. Even more than occasional lawsuits, immigration is likely to raise the general temperature surrounding preferences. Though most Americans are unaware of the fact, recently-arrived immigrants, both legal and illegal, are eligible for preferential treatment if they fall into one of the protected racial or ethnic categories. More Americans are likely to become aware of this, however, as continuing high immigration significantly alters the ethnic balance of the U.S. When preferences were first instituted, they meant that 89 percent of Americans would have to make sacrifices in college admissions, job hirings, and promotions for the 11 percent who were the descendants of slaves. Today, they signify that the 72 percent of Americans who are non-Hispanic whites must make those sacrifices for the other 28 percent, with the 35 percent who are white men bearing the full burden since white women are the beneficiaries of some preferences. And these percentages are likely to change dramatically as whites shrink to half of the population by 2050. That makes such sacrifices much more burdensome and likely to be resented. Of course, since the new immigrants are likely to be a political force that favors preferences, that will not necessarily make the electoral arithmetic more hostile to racial favoritism. But it will ensure that preferences remain a major political issue.

Grassroots politics. If Tod Lindberg is right and no ambitious Republican cares to take up this cause, grassroots activists are likely to fill the vacuum. Indeed, they are likely to identify both major-party establishments as their opponents and to seek redress through voter initiatives, third-party efforts, and single-issue organizations. As such they are less under the control of party regulars—and so more likely to intrude upon the political process at times and in ways that inconvenience the major-party structures in Washington. Already, in the short period since the Michigan decisions, grassroots activists inspired by Ward Connerly's success in California have begun the process of putting a voter initiative against racial preferences on the Michigan ballot for 2004. If that happens, both in Michigan and in other states with voter-initiative provisions, it would ensure the very result that George W. Bush hoped to avoid by quietly endorsing the O'Connor verdict: namely, that a contentious issue like race preferences would be under consideration in 2004, bringing a large Democratic black turnout against him—but in these circumstances without winning him any votes from those adversely affected by preferences.

In other words, the Right is not going to "move on" and this issue is not going away. My advice to the president: Stick to fundamental principles. They will cause you less trouble in the long run. And you will feel a great deal better in any event. **NR**

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■ **PUBLIC POLICY II**

'Diversity' . . . *D'oh!*

Some tactical stumbles on the way to the *Michigan* debacle

JOHN J. MILLER

THE Supreme Court delivered a huge blow to equal opportunity on June 23, but the two cases involving "diversity" at the University of Michigan may have been lost well before then. That's because the Center for Individual Rights, the Washington, D.C.-based law firm handling the litigation, made a tactical decision early on not to challenge Michigan's claim that racial and ethnic diversity improves the quality of higher education. "We didn't have the resources to turn it into an issue," says Curt Levey of CIR. "Besides, people out there have a sense that diversity is valuable, and we didn't want to get into a debate over that. We wanted to focus on the legal principles."

As it turned out, legal principle had little to do with what the Supreme Court decided. As Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote in her majority opinion, "The Law School's educational judgment that such diversity is essential to its educational mission is one to which we defer." CIR deferred as well. In 2000, as CIR and Michigan were wrangling in federal district court, CIR's lead trial attorney, Kirk Kolbo, allowed that "racial diversity . . . is something that's valuable, maybe even important."

It is impossible to know whether this concession affected the outcome of the case; second-guessing is easy. What's more, responsibility for an outrageous decision must lie squarely with the five justices who rendered it, and in particular O'Connor. Another culprit is the Bush administration, which submitted a feeble amicus brief and greeted the eventual decisions with troubling approval. "I applaud the Supreme Court for recognizing the value of diversity on our nation's campuses," said President Bush. "Today's decisions seek a careful balance between the goal of campus diversity and the fundamental principle of equal treatment under the law." The Michigan rulings may "seek" such a thing, but they do not achieve it. They don't even come close. They represent a near-total win for the supporters of racial preferences.

"Failing to take on the diversity argument was a big mistake," says Ward Connerly of the American Civil Rights Institute. It's a blunder conservatives can no longer afford to make. For more than a decade, conservatives have waged a slow but successful legal offensive against preferences in contracting and voting; the Supreme Court's acceptance of "diversity" as a rationale for state-sponsored racial discrimination puts these gains in jeopardy. The Left now will try to expand the "diversity" argument beyond the confines of higher education. Pretty soon, it will be offered as a rationale for set-aside contracts, racial gerrymandering, and the composition of magnet schools in K–12 systems. Can "diversity" for gays be far behind? Conservatives who thought they were on the verge of a game-winning touchdown with the Michigan cases now find that they've thrown an interception—and the other team is sprinting down the field.

The Center for Individual Rights is a first-rate public-interest law firm; it was the key force behind the 1996 *Hopwood* decision, which restricted the use of racial preferences at the University of Texas and which, until June, was the most important federal court decision on preferences in education since *Bakke* in 1978. So the Michigan plaintiffs were in good hands when they hooked up with CIR and filed their lawsuits six years ago. The *Hopwood* case was won on pure law, with no mention of the social-science gobbledygook underpinning Michigan's key claim that diversity is essential to intellectual growth. But Michigan's innovation was a necessary one if racial preferences were to survive far into the 21st century: With bigotry an ever-decreasing feature of American life, the old justifications for preferences were losing their punch. They needed a new reason for being, and they got it from Patricia Gurin, a Michigan psychology professor who produced a flurry of research on the supposed benefits of diversity in Ann Arbor.

Gurin's conclusions have been picked apart in exhaustive critiques by the Center for Equal Opportunity (CEO) and the National Association of Scholars and contradicted in separate research by political scientists Stanley Rothman, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Neil Nevitte. Yet Michigan's entire case rested on her claims. Still, CIR believed Gurin's work was irrelevant. "Whether diversity is a compelling state interest is a legal question, not an empirical one," says CIR's Levey. Questions of principle shouldn't play second fiddle to the soft claims of social science, after all.

And so CIR made a very sound constitutional argument against the use of racial preferences in higher education,

University of Michigan students protest outside the Supreme Court, June 2003

MOLLY RILEY/REUTERS

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ignoring what social science might have to say on the matter. "If people followed the normal rules of logic, CIR should have won going away," says one conservative involved in the cases. "But judges aren't normal people and they don't always follow logic."

"I say this more in sadness than in anger, but CIR made a tactical error," says Peter Wood of Boston University. "They should have confronted the diversity argument." This would not have been difficult. Following the oral arguments in April, it was reported in the press that a University of Michigan survey of its own students showed "diversity" having a negative impact on campus. Naturally, this piece of information did not find its way into Michigan's court presentations. It was briefly assumed by some that the university had suppressed the survey results—until administrators said they had provided the report to CIR years earlier. "We had the material in our files," says Levey. "We overlooked it."

When the Michigan decisions were handed down, CIR claimed a partial victory because the Court struck down the university's system of undergraduate admissions. "Overall, I think this is a big step forward," said CIR president Terence Pell in a video clip shown on the PBS *NewsHour*. "I think what we are seeing today is the beginning of the end of race preferences." CIR is virtually alone in this view, because in upholding Michigan's law-school admissions, five justices enshrined diversity in the Constitution. "We were wiped out," says Michael Greve, who headed CIR until 2000 and conceived the original lawsuits. "Anything else is spin."

Not everyone on the right is as glum as Greve. The rulings were a major disappointment, but many conservative lawyers believe they leave the door open for more worthwhile litigation. "If the Left were in our position, it would not give up," says Roger Clegg of CEO. "It would act like one of those whack-a-mole games you see at Chuck E. Cheese: You hit it in one place, but it pops up in another. That's what we should do." If the makeup of the Court changes in the next few years, perhaps the justices would even reverse themselves. They've done it before, and they're more likely to do so when a ruling is fresh and controversial than after it's perceived as old and settled. O'Connor suggested that preferences should be gone for good in 25 years, but waiting that long may be exactly the wrong approach. Another quarter-century might entrench them even further. At the very least, the Michigan rulings provide conservatives with a solid reason for opposing White House counsel Alberto Gonzales as a nominee to the Supreme Court: He had much to do with the weakness of the administration's brief, and the positive air of its response to the rulings.

Conservatives may be able to limit the damage from the Michigan cases if they have a hand in determining how the rulings will be enforced. One reason the law school's admission system passed muster with O'Connor is that it engaged in a "highly individualized, holistic review" of all applicants. This will be difficult to duplicate for undergraduates, however, because the volume of applications is many times larger. Michigan is already assuring everybody that this is what it will do, but that doesn't mean it will succeed. "Just because they glance over an application doesn't mean they've given it serious attention," says one Bush-administration official. "And that's what the Court is now requiring."

Finally, there are political solutions. These haven't worked well for conservatives in the past, but it's important to note that the Supreme Court didn't say universities *must* use preferences to achieve diverse student bodies; it merely said they *may* use them. The last real attempt in Congress to rein in preferences came eight years ago, when presidential candidate Bob Dole offered a bill to restrict them. It fared about as well as Dole's 1996 campaign; since then, many Republicans have tried to make peace with preferences, in the belief that fighting against them riles up their opposition more than it pleases their own troops.

One political approach has worked, however. In 1996, California voters passed a sweeping ban on racial preferences in their state. Two years later, voters in Washington followed suit. Ward Connerly led both ballot initiatives. Just a few days after the Michigan rulings were announced, Connerly was clearing his schedule and making travel plans—for Ann Arbor. The fight against race preferences will go on. **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY III**

From Bad to Worse

Affirmative action and prescription drugs, and what they have to do with each other

JOHN O. McGINNIS

In the last week of June, conservatism suffered two of its worst defeats in a generation—the Supreme Court's endorsement of state-sponsored racial preferences and congressional passage of a huge new prescription-drug entitlement. Worse yet, President Bush praised the Supreme Court decision—and twisted arms in Congress to pass the drug bill. Both of these defeats illustrate modern democracy's inexorable drive to provide large benefits to the few at the expense of the public good. Politicians tend to favor government programs that will reward identifiable interest groups to the disadvantage of the general citizenry, because the narrow groups are almost by definition better organized to influence elected officials. The racial-preferences issue mobilizes particular groups that focus on identity politics; similarly, the AARP (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons) makes prescription drugs the main determinant of its political support.

In contrast, the costs of the programs in question are too diffuse to affect political outcomes. While large in the aggregate, the prescription-drug bill imposes costs individually too small to drive taxpayers to opposition; likewise, citizens face only a relatively small statistical chance of being harmed by racial-preference programs, so—while they are happy to vote against preferences in referenda—they will not invest resources in lobbying their legislatures to kill preferences.

Racial preferences and the prescription-drug program also resemble each other in

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that they distribute benefits to people on the basis of immutable characteristics: race and age. At the time of the framing of our Constitution, religion was a close-to-immutable characteristic, in that few people would willingly change it and risk damnation; with the Establishment Clause, the Bill of Rights wisely prohibited the federal government from handing out benefits on the basis of religious identity. Today, race and age offer easy rationales for excluding others from differential government benefits, just as religion did in the era of the Founding. Of course, supporters of racial preferences and prescription-drug benefits justify their favored exclusive benefits with much high-minded rhetoric about justice and social cohesion—but then, so did 19th-century British politicians trying to justify special benefits to those connected with the Anglican Church.

These special-interest programs will have broad—and truly unfortunate—consequences. As racial preferences grow more prevalent, so will divisive identity politics. As prescription-drug costs grow, the government will be more and more likely to engage in price controls, which will discourage innovation and harm the nation's health. But by the time these social bills come due, our current legislators will have moved on to lucrative retirement.

Special-interest programs do face the danger that a rhetorically gifted or charismatic politician might be tempted to wake the public to their costs. Therefore both these programs travel under a heavy armor of evasions and outright lies. "Diversity," of course, is a term that skirts the issue of both preference and race: It suggests that universities are pursuing a program to expose students to different ideas of all kinds, when in reality most university professors want to perpetuate a left-liberal orthodoxy that preferences help sustain. Witness the testimony in the Michigan case that some professors want to exclude Cubans from preferences generally available to Latinos—on the grounds that Cuban Americans are predominantly Republican.

The mechanics of preferences are also shrouded in secrecy. The Supreme Court rulings last week themselves promote covert discrimination. The Court invalidated Michigan's undergraduate program—which awarded specific point totals for membership in particular ethnic groups—but upheld the law-school program, in which admissions officers evaluate each file "holistically" before giving a very similar boost to the racially preferred. Michigan's undergraduate program can get results much like those it got before, simply by hiring more admissions officers. That is a small price to pay for the political benefit of keeping discrimination behind closed doors.

The campaign for the prescription-drug benefit is also rife with deceit. It claims to be structured as an insurance program rather than as an entitlement program. The elderly purchase insurance and receive benefits in return—and what is obscured is that they are also receiving a large transfer from the government. The disguise is easy to see through: After all, any careful read-

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er of the newspaper understands that the drug benefit, like Social Security, is an entitlement rather than simple insurance. But given that most people pay almost no attention to the issue, a little deception goes a long way. Just as a butterfly needs only the slightest protective coloration to improve its chances of survival, so a political program needs only a small amount of camouflage to ward off most attacks.

Finally, these programs are also alike in that they fail even the test of principled liberalism. John Rawls, the primary theorist of modern liberalism, wrote that programs were just if they were designed to help the worst-off. But neither of these programs is targeted for the worst-off, and they will frequently do damage to the needy. The prescription-drug benefit is not means-tested, but goes to all the elderly—the wealthiest age cohort in the nation. The extra spending will harm most the youthful poor, who will subsidize richer citizens to an even greater extent than Social Security already requires. Diversity preferences, similarly, are not directed at individuals who have actually suffered discrimination; by design they can go to the daughter of the African-American doctor in Scarsdale, wealthy Latino immigrants, and even the nephews of the president at the expense of the truly underprivileged.

The bully pulpit of the presidency is the best potential counterweight to this inevitable tendency of factions to try to maximize benefits for themselves at the expense of the common good. A president can mobilize citizens in behalf of principle, and he has an incentive to do so: He has his historical reputation to protect. Ronald Reagan, to cite a recent example, is already climbing the ranks of presidential ratings based in no small measure on his philosophical consistency.

For this reason, it is especially disappointing that President Bush has aided rather than obstructed these special-interest programs. By all accounts, the White House watered down a strong Justice Department brief against preferences that would have given far more political support for a Supreme Court decision banning discrimination; after the Court's ruling, the president seemed to praise a decision endorsing a program he had previously condemned as containing quotas. On the drug benefit, the president appears to want the bill enacted even if it lacks means testing—and even if its weak privatization reforms will be outweighed by the encouragement it provides companies to drop private benefits for retirees altogether.

A Republican president needs to be a more articulate and frank exponent of conservative principles than President Bush has been on these issues. When Bill Clinton was president, the Right was far freer to attack such programs, and fight for better ones, than it is when a Republican president endorses them. Recall that Republicans under Clinton succeeded in passing welfare reform, while the key domestic achievement of the first Bush administration was the costly Americans with Disabilities Act.

The current administration's policies may pay political dividends in the short run. For instance, support for the prescription-drug bill will undoubtedly help in the key battleground states of Florida and Pennsylvania; as the economy sputters through no fault of his own, the president has taken out reelection insurance. Even more optimistically, perhaps his plan is to convert a huge reelection victory, with the prospect of additional Republican senators, into a push for fundamental entitlement reform. But special-interest tendencies are so powerful that the principles constraining them must be laid out again and again to have any hope of being effective. Unfortunately, the actions the president has taken have obscured the principles of colorblindness and entitlement reform that are essential to arresting the use of race and age as wedges to divide the polity. And the victories by minority- and age-based interest groups today only embolden them to redouble their future efforts.

The president and his administration still have time to enunciate principles that will limit such special-interest exactions. He can make it clear that colorblindness must be the general rule for government programs outside of higher education now, and even within higher education in the relatively near future. He can lay out principles for future entitlement reform that will eventually apply to prescription drugs. George W. Bush still has the opportunity to go down in history as a politician who tamed rather than rode the special-interest state. **NR**

■ **POLITICS**

HateBush.org

The rise of a website, a political action committee . . . a movement?

BYRON YORK

As the 2000 presidential campaign began, a young computer programmer from Massachusetts named Zack Exley enjoyed 15 minutes of fame when he created a website called GWBush.com. The site, which Exley billed as a "parody," featured a doctored photo of George W. Bush with what appeared to be cocaine on his upper lip and nose. It sold bumper stickers with sayings like "GWBush, Not a Crackhead Anymore!" and "GWBush, Born with a Silver Spoon Up His Nose." And it featured a cartoon of Bush dancing with a bottle in his hand as kegs of beer bounced around the screen and "Louie, Louie" played in the background.

Exley and his site attracted relatively little attention until Bush himself took notice and told reporters, with evident disgust, "There's a lot of garbage in politics, and obviously [Exley] is a garbage man." That, of course, sent the press looking for what had made the candidate so angry. Then the Bush campaign gave Exley even more publicity when it filed a complaint against GWBush.com with the Federal Election Commission, asking that the site be subject to campaign-finance laws. Once that was over (Bush lost), the news coverage faded, and GWBush.com disappeared from view.

These days, however, GWBush.com is still in business. Visitors can still watch the beer cartoon and buy bumper stickers that say, "Some people are just too stupid to be president." Given all that has happened since the 2000 campaign, none of that might seem to merit serious discussion, except that in recent months Zack Exley has emerged as a serious player in Democratic politics. The creator of GWBush.com is now the organizing

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director for MoveOn.org, the web-based activist group that attracted worldwide attention in June when it held a "virtual primary" of Democratic presidential candidates.

The contest, won by former Vermont governor Howard Dean, brought waves of praise for MoveOn. "In the long run, MoveOn could be our Rush Limbaugh," said Democratic pollster Celinda Lake. The *New York Times* published an editorial—entitled "Happy Days Are Virtually Here Again"—in which it hailed MoveOn as a "glimpse into [the] politics of the future."

But under close examination, MoveOn appears to be more a reflection of the politics of GWBush.com than a genuinely new, forward-looking political movement. The site is filled with the hostility toward the president that defines some segments of the Democratic party, and its recent success has some Democrats worried that it will give a new voice—and power—to the Bush-hating Left. "There are quite a few people in the party who really do want this election to be about their self-righteous knowledge of the perfidy of George W. Bush and the perfidy of the centrist Democrats who have caved in to him," says one Democrat. "It's just one long bellow of rage." And right now, that rage is being heard through MoveOn.org.

Although it is now preoccupied with attacking George W. Bush, MoveOn actually got its start defending Bill Clinton. The group was founded by multi-millionaire California software designers Wes Boyd and Joan Blades, whose company Berkeley Systems created the popular "flying toaster" screen-saver. Boyd and Blades sold the company in 1997 and formed MoveOn the next year, in the midst of the Lewinsky scandal. The purpose of the new site was to save Clinton from impeachment.

On September 22, 1998, MoveOn made its first public statement, a press release headlined, "Disgusted Citizens Organize on the Internet: Urge Congress to Censure and Move On." The release called MoveOn a "bipartisan group of concerned citizens" and said it was a "'flash campaign,' possible only through the organizing capabilities of the Internet." Although MoveOn's goal was to head off impeachment, it warned that if Congress began impeachment proceedings, "we will shift focus to highlighting this issue in the fall elections."

Of course, Congress did begin impeachment proceedings, and MoveOn did indeed shift focus to the 1998 congressional elections. According to Federal Election Commission records, Boyd and Blades formed a MoveOn political action committee, MoveOnPAC, on October 23, 1998—they put in $12,000—and on October 26 the group announced a wide-ranging effort to defeat Republicans in the November elections.

But Republicans held both houses of Congress (although with some losses), and on December 19, the House voted to impeach Clinton. MoveOn changed course again, launching a "We Will Remember" campaign that would supposedly target impeachment leaders in the 2000 elections. MoveOn asked supporters to take the "We will act" pledge to elect candidates who "reject the politics of division and personal destruction."

MoveOn is filled with the hostility toward the president that defines some segments of the Democratic party.

On June 30, 1999, the group announced that MoveOnPAC had raised more than $250,000 for the "We Will Remember" campaign. By the time the 2000 elections came around, MoveOn had targeted 30 House and Senate races across the country, making all of its contributions to Democratic candidates. According to FEC records, MoveOnPAC contributed about $2.4 million to Democratic campaigns.

Of course, Democrats again failed to win control of the House or Senate, and lost the presidency as well. So MoveOn moved away from its founding purpose. The group seized on gun control, campaign-finance reform, and, most energetically, opposing the policies of George W. Bush. In 2001, the ever-changing MoveOn mission statement was changed to read that "MoveOn.org is committed . . . to broadening participation to counter the influence of monied interests and partisan extremes." MoveOn announced drives to oppose the president's tax cut, his energy policy, and, most prominently, the war in Iraq. Its biggest hit was a remake of Lyndon Johnson's infamous 1964 "Daisy Ad" updated to oppose the invasion of Iraq.

Now that the war is over, MoveOn is taking the lead in accusing the president of lying about the existence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. The group recently bought a full-page ad in the *New York Times* with the headline MISLEADER superimposed over a picture of the president. The group has also started a petition drive asking Congress to create an independent commission to investigate the weapons issue.

With the 2004 campaigns getting underway, MoveOn coordinates closely with Democratic candidates around the country, building on its work from 2000 and 2002. For example, less than a week before the 2002 voting, Wes Boyd sent an e-mail to supporters asking them to send money to a long list of Democratic House and Senate candidates. "We talk to these campaigns every day, so they can adjust their last-minute spending," Boyd said. It was essential, he declared, to avoid the reality of "right-wing domination," "America's worst nightmare." (Neither Boyd nor Zack Exley responded to interview requests.)

Most of MoveOn's funding comes from its members, but it also has close relationships with a number of left-wing foundations. For example, MoveOn has what is called a "fiscal sponsorship" relationship with an organization known as the San Francisco Foundation Community Initiative Funds. The foundation gives to a variety of liberal causes; in 2000, the group's largest single expenditure, $162,000, went to fund opposition to Proposition 22, a measure that defined the institution of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. Proposition 22 won overwhelming support across California (except the San Francisco area). MoveOn also receives money from the Tides Foundation, a wealthy but little-known group that funds dozens of left-wing organizations; one of its large donations went to the Alliance for Justice, which is trying to stop a number of President Bush's

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nominees to the federal courts.

Despite it all—its anti-Bush campaign, its contributions made only to Democrats, its ties with left-wing charities—MoveOn calls itself a "nonpartisan" organization. "MoveOn.org is an issue-oriented, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that gives people a voice in shaping the laws that affect their lives," says its website. "MoveOn.org engages people in the civic process, using the Internet to democratically determine a nonpartisan agenda . . ."

Of course, no one believes that. Nevertheless, MoveOn is being credited with changing the face of American politics. There's more than a little hype in that conclusion. Yes, the Internet has real potential as a fundraising tool. But so far MoveOn has not shown that it can expand its appeal beyond the hard-core, Bush-hating, antiwar Left. It can buy splashy advertisements and generate headlines. But there's nothing to suggest that it can win elections. **NR**

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ROMAN GENN

■ **EUROPE**

Yes, Silvio!

Berlusconi ruffles feathers—the right ones

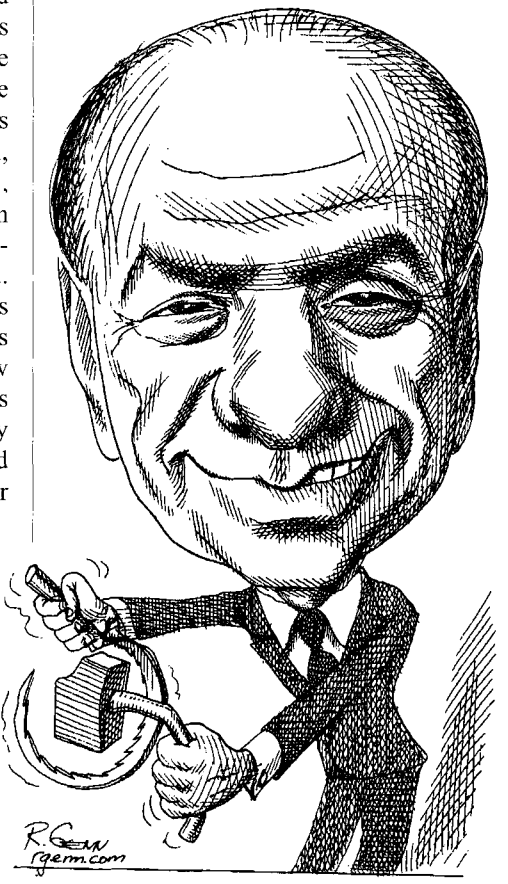
DAVID PRYCE-JONES

In the infinitely gray landscape of Europe, Silvio Berlusconi, Italy's prime minister, is a blob of color and energy. Why, he speaks his mind as though he thought himself Donald Rumsfeld. Therefore one funny thing after another happens to him.

Italy has just assumed the presidency of the European Union, a role whose occupant serves a mere six months before turning it over to some other country. As temporary EU president, Berlusconi addressed the European parliament at Strasbourg. There he found Romano Prodi, also a president, in his case of the European Commission. The Italian press customarily refers to these two political and personal rivals as "the odd couple." A self-made man, Berlusconi has an ex-film-star wife, a mansion outside Milan, a house in Bermuda, a yacht, and the multi-billion-dollar business empire he has created. From Bologna, Prodi has spent his life as a left-wing academic and pointedly rides a bicycle. "That nice cyclist," was how Berlusconi once referred to him. Besides their EU titles of president, what they have in common is that both have faced corruption charges in Italy, and so far gotten away with it.

At the Strasbourg parliament they were waiting for Berlusconi. In the chamber, a claque of socialists and Greens brandished placards with slogans such as "No Godfather for Europe." A French Communist called the Berlusconi government "barbaric," and some Belgian dug up a comparison to Attila the Hun. A German socialist by the name of Martin Schulz then accused Berlusconi of exploiting an immunity law to sidestep charges of bribery. This Schulz has a scrubby beard, and Berlusconi famously interprets physical traits as ideological statements. So he leveled with the fellow: "I know there is a man in Italy producing a film on the Nazi concentration camps. I would like to suggest you for the role of leader. You would be perfect."

A deluge of sanctimonious protest broke over the continent. In the course of Berlusconi's successful election campaign, the London *Economist* had thundered that he was "not fit to lead the government of any country." Now everyone began braying that he was not fit to lead Europe. Prodi looked ashen-faced for days. Ambassadors were summoned. Calls for apology included one from Chancellor Schroeder on behalf of Germany. Though Berlusconi was accused of resorting to national stereotypes, scores of cartoonists gleefully caricatured him as Mussolini. Journalists filled columns with his alleged gaffes, for instance how after September 11 he had said that Western civilization is superior to Islam because it "has at its



The Italian PM

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core, as its greatest value, freedom, which is not the heritage of the Islamic culture." It was equally and unforgivably racist that in some European forum he had once complained that the Finns "don't even know what prosciutto is." And one of his numerous bull's-eyes was to describe those same Strasbourg parliamentarians as "part-time democrats."

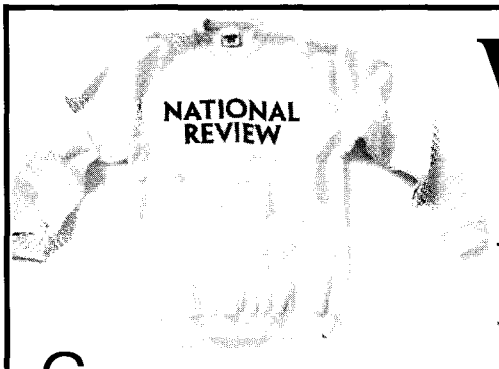
Italians vote for him because they appreciate hearing truths no other politician dares utter, and they rather like the swashbuckling style. Seeing that Berlusconi has obviously done well for himself, they hope that he can do the same for the country. The novelist Umberto Eco quipped that admiration for Berlusconi was like a cargo cult in the Pacific, in which islanders believe that passing ships are going to shower goods and wealth on them. Law in Italy is indicative rather than obligatory, and nobody can be sure quite how cavalierly Berlusconi (or Prodi, for that matter, when he was in office in Rome) really did treat it. Perhaps he did railroad through parliament a law giving himself immunity—but then President Jacques Chirac has done the same in France. Rightly or wrongly, the public takes it for granted that anyone making a career has to find a way through myriad forms of chicanery; the politicization of courts; the bribing of judges and tax officials; the buying and selling of public or private assets in crony deals. Everyone's doing it, in the words of the Noel Coward song. One of Berlusconi's predecessors as prime minister, Bettino Craxi, fled to Tunisia with the loot; and another, Giulio Andreotti, was charged with murder, no less.

The Cold War locked the Christian Democrats and the Communists into their respective places. Both parties were corrupt patronage systems, and their pretense to legitimacy died along with the Soviet Union. Moving into the sudden political vacuum of the 1990s, Berlusconi and his brand-new party Forza Italia directed the restructuring of the Right and the Left into a more normal parliamentary system. It was a great achievement. The Communist Left will never forgive him for the damage done to their grip on the political and cultural spheres. A typical row has just occurred over an essay subject included on the summer graduation exams of high-school students. The subject was "Terror and the political repression in the totalitarian systems," and its introductory wording devoted one sentence to Fascism but four sentences to Communism. As in every previous year, those responsible for exams had drafted the question, but former Communists and other leftists did not hesitate to accuse Berlusconi and his allies of trying to mold the minds of the young.

Italians vote for Berlusconi because they appreciate hearing truths no other politician dares utter, and they rather like the swashbuckling style.

The Left naturally resents Berlusconi's fortune and his attempts to protect it, but the exceptional malignity of the attack derives from his unconditional admiration of the United States. "I support American policy," he once said, "whatever it might be." Rising from a modest background through his own efforts, he is a standing example of American can-do values. He advocates the free market at every opportunity, and praises Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. He sides with the United States against the proposals of the Kyoto treaty. He would have liked to send an Italian contingent to Afghanistan, and probably to Iraq too. He is President Bush's welcome guest at the Crawford ranch.

At Strasbourg they shudder at anyone like that. It's a socialist assembly carefully pre-arranged for the sermonizings of the bearded Schulz and his colleagues, in which conservatives are ostracized, and lucky not to be outlawed. Berlusconi supposedly dishonors Europe and returns it to the mercy of outmoded nationalistic prejudices, but more likely he's presaging the day when these titular presidencies vanish into the limbo out of which they were invented, and the Strasbourg parliament echoes with its own emptiness. **NR**



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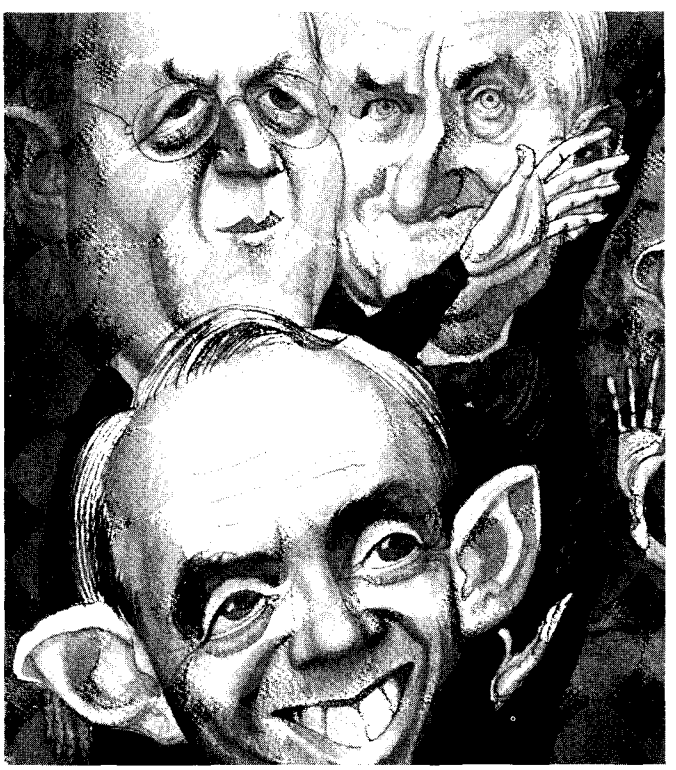
■ COVER STORY

Coming Out Ahead

Why gay marriage is on the way

RAMESH PONNURU

FOR social conservatives, it seems that the battle over gay rights is nearing an end before it has even fairly begun. It is true that a small majority of the American public continues to believe, as the poll question puts it, that "sexual relations between two adults of the same sex" are "always wrong." It is true, as well, that a slightly larger majority believes that persons of the same sex should not be allowed to marry.



But public opinion has been moving with stunning rapidity. In the 1970s and '80s, the percentage of Americans who believed gay sex was "always wrong" barely budged. The National Opinion Research Center found that 73 percent held that belief in 1973, and 76 percent did in 1990. By 2000, that number had fallen by 16 points. It fell another 6 in the next two years. In 1996, Gallup found that 26 percent of the public supported same-sex marriage. In late June of this year, 39 percent did. Young people support it more than their elders. The trend lines favor gay marriage.

So do legal developments, as Gerard V. Bradley explains (page 26). Elite, including legal-elite, opinion favors gay rights more than public opinion does. Still, public opinion influences the courts. If courts had imposed gay marriage in 1990, there would have been a substantial public backlash. Now the idea looks less radical. If the courts move this year, or two years from now, there may yet be a backlash—but perhaps not one large enough to be effective. Three decades after *Roe*, almost three years after *Bush* v. *Gore*, no one is shocked when the courts make the weightiest political decisions.

Another shift in public sentiment is less easily captured in poll numbers: the rise of what one might call an "anti-anti-gay" bloc. People in this group may have qualms about homosexuality and may not support gay marriage. But they are at least as uncomfortable with anything that strikes them as hostile to gay people, with rhetoric that singles them out for criticism, with political figures who seem to spend too much time worrying about them. It is this group—more than gays themselves or even unequivocal supporters of gay rights—that has caused the Bush White House to take a moderate line on gay issues.

President Bush opposes gay marriage, "hate crimes" legis-

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lation, and even the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. But he has also appointed openly gay officials, refrained from picking fights with the gay lobby, and generally frustrated social-conservative groups. In March, Marc Racicot, then-leader of the Republican National Committee, met with a liberal gay organization and assured them that bigotry in his party was fading. In April, when Sen. Rick Santorum was being pilloried, Bush expressed support for him—but too tepidly for social conservatives. Some of them warned that traditionalist voters would stay home in 2004. But Bush is responding to political circumstances that run far deeper than today's tactical jockeying and that social conservatives, thus far, have been powerless to change.

HETEROS GONE WILD

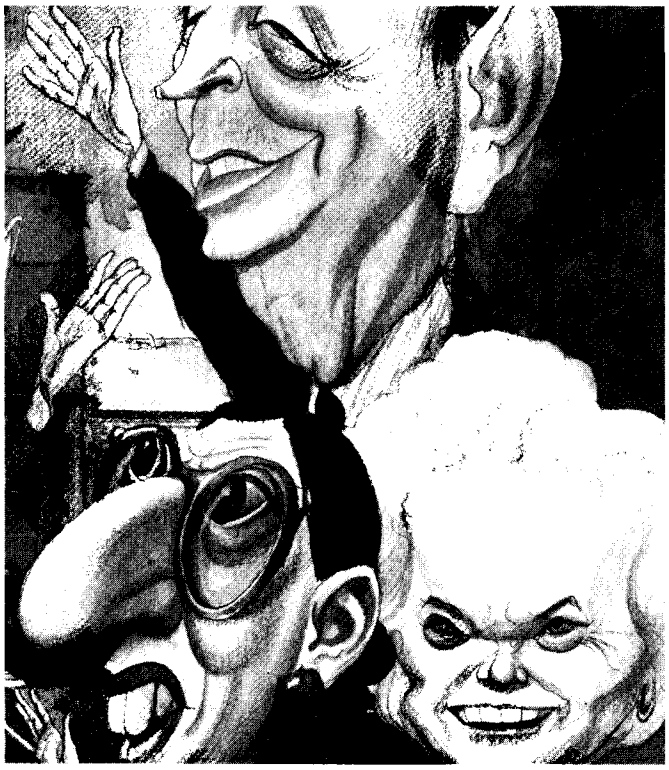
The change in public attitudes toward homosexuality has several causes, but three in particular bear mentioning: the effects of the sexual revolution, the changed focus of gay activism in the 1990s, and the ineffectiveness of social-conservative organizations.

Because of the sexual revolution among heterosexuals, social conservatives may have lost on gay marriage as soon as they started debating it. In the 1990s, as liberal journalist E. J. Graff has written in the *Boston Globe*, "the religious right barnstormed the nation warning against 'gay marriage'—with an odd result. For both straight and gay folks, the phrase was transformed from an oxymoron into a real possibility."

Again, most people continue to agree with social conservatives that marriage should be reserved for heterosexual couples. But they do not agree with the premises that underlie that conclusion. The traditional moral argument against homosexual sex has been part of a larger critique of non-marital sex—and, classically, of sex that is not oriented toward procreation within marriage. Social conservatives need no instruction on how the links among sex, procreation, and marriage have been weakened among heterosexuals. They know that many people have adopted what might be called a privatized view of marriage, as an institution whose contours are plastic, whose purpose is to provide emotional satisfaction to the persons concerned, and whose terms are negotiable (and revocable). But they have been slow to see some of the political effects of these social changes.

The logic of the argument against homosexuality now implicates the behavior of a lot of heterosexuals. If the argument is made openly, and cast as a case for traditional sexual morals in general, a large part of the public will flinch. If the argument is made so as to single out gays, the logic vanishes. Social conservatives begin to look as though they are motivated not by principle but by the desire to persecute a minority. If no effective public argument can be made, the prohibition on gay marriage must survive based on tradition and unarticulated reasons. These are weak defenses in a rationalistic and sexually liberated era.

By the mid 1990s, social conservatives increasingly relied on the dialectical argument against gay marriage: the claim that acceptance of it logically requires acceptance of polygamy as well. That argument, as far as I can tell, is sound, and



it may be effective in the short run. (In the long run it is as likely to increase support for polygamy as it is to decrease support for gay marriage.) But whatever its effectiveness, resorting to the dialectical argument was a sign of political weakness. It meant that gay marriage was not self-evidently objectionable, but had to be condemned because it would lead to other, more objectionable things. It meant that the argument from definition no longer worked.

THE (CONSERVATIVE) GAY AGENDA

At the same time that social conservatives were reaching this dead end, the agenda of gay-rights organizations was changing, too. What, after all, have been gays' great demands in recent years? They have asked for the opportunity to serve in the armed forces, to lead Boy Scout troops, to marry and adopt. Social-conservative rhetoric on homosexuality remained stuck in the 1970s, presenting gays as sexual radicals. Social conservatives were really the last squares.

Homosexual groups also embraced the quintessential conservative idea of a fixed human nature. Indeed, they pushed an exaggerated form of that idea: genetic determinism. Many people who would otherwise be disposed to object to homosexuality came to believe that gays and lesbians were "born that way." Gay activists had to be ambivalent about this development, given the subtext: Who would *choose* to be that way? A mildly "homophobic" sentiment was recruited to the side of gay rights.

It has been a powerful ally. Genetic determinism has erased the distinction between being and doing—between, that is, identity and behavior. No space has been left in which to love the sinner and hate the sin; objection is discrimination. Justice Scalia's recent attempt to maintain the distinction, to say that a ban on gays' sexual behavior does not discriminate against

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people on the basis of their (putatively innate) desires, was widely regarded as both hair-splitting and demeaning.

The most effective gay strategy was not a political strategy at all. It was the choice of individuals to identify themselves openly as homosexuals. Scores of millions of Americans now have friends and relatives whom they know are gay. Perhaps as a strict matter of logic, that should not have affected their views on sexual morality. But logic and eros have never been easy bedfellows, have they?

It was perhaps impossible for social conservatives to resist a tide so strong. But their failure was partly of their own making. They were simultaneously too loving and too hateful. The second point is familiar enough to everyone. For the reasons outlined above, persuasive social-conservative rhetoric on gay rights is difficult to devise. But the rhetoric the social Right actually adopted had the additional burden of lending itself to easy caricature as spiteful, harsh, and obsessive—in part because it was not infrequently all of those things. The Religious Right's love for gays, meanwhile, was not the sort that homosexuals could recognize. It took the form of wanting to save their souls. What religious conservatives wanted was for gays to become ex-gays. The unspoken wish of many other conservatives was for gays to re-closet themselves. Neither had any chance of happening in large numbers.

The proposed marriage amendment to the Constitution nicely illustrates the folly and weakness of organized social conservatism. The amendment will probably fail—most proposed constitutional amendments do. But it may very well be the only way to prevent the incremental judicial imposition of gay marriage. One would think that social-conservative groups would be working as hard as they could to enact it. Yet the Catholic bishops' conference is divided about the amendment. The Family Research Council came out against it, and then declared itself neutral. The council objects to the amendment because, among other things, it would not bar a state legislature from creating same-sex civil unions. The failure of judgment here should be an object lesson for students of politics for ages to come.

When the Massachusetts supreme court brings full-fledged gay marriage to an American state for the first time, the issue will heat up. Anyone who expects President Bush's storied quest for the Catholic vote to strengthen the hand of social conservatives has not been looking at the survey data. *Catholic World Report* recently commissioned a survey that suggested that students at Catholic colleges became more liberal during their time on campus. The freshmen were pro-life, and the seniors pro-choice. What was even more interesting was that a majority of Catholic-college freshmen *already* favored gay marriage when they got to campus. I suspect that even conservative Catholics who oppose gay marriage are especially sensitive to rhetoric that seems intolerant toward gays as persons.

After Massachusetts, will Republicans find a way to object forcefully to gay marriage and to push for the marriage amendment, without looking intolerant? That would be a tall order even for people who thought deeply about these matters. Social conservatives have not yet lost this battle, and their defeat is not quite inevitable. But that is the way to bet. **NR**

■ **COVER STORY II**

Stand and Fight

Don't take gay marriage lying down

GERARD V. BRADLEY

It's time for conservatives to take their cue from the New Jersey Nets, or maybe from those hard-luck kids, the Boston Red Sox. Only a few weeks ago, the victors in *Lawrence* v. *Texas*—the Supreme Court case that struck down a Texas law against sodomy—popped open the champagne and broke out the brie. The "Gay Pride" marchers were prouder than ever. "Gay families" are this season's media darlings. Moral traditionalists are shocked (though not awed). Most sit on the sidelines, dispirited, towels draped over their heads, trying to ignore the on-field celebration. The White House is quiet. Other Republican leaders are "unavailable for comment."

Enough already.

As the Nets and the Red Sox will tell you: Today is the start of next season. Time to bury disappointment and anger. Time to get going again. And we can thank some members of the Court for telling us that next season may be the last, at least for marriage. It's time to fire every single shot in our guns: Three justices, including the chief justice of the United States, say that the constitutional struts of marriage are gone. All it will take, evidently, is one more plaintiff, one more lawsuit. Could happen next term; more likely it is a couple of years off. What do we do? Is there time enough to do anything?

Let us take stock. Conservatives can no longer take comfort in DOMAs (defense-of-marriage acts), state laws affirming that marriage is only for a man and a woman. For there is nothing in *Lawrence*—in its turgid language or in its (putative) reasoning about dignity, liberty, and autonomy—that can be held at bay by statutes or state constitutions. The Court, say the dissenters, is ready to declare a constitutional right to same-sex marriage. And that will be the nation's law—"anything in the Constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding" (the words of the supremacy clause in Article VI).

Lawrence was decided 6–3. Conservatives cannot divert the Court by stacking it. There just isn't time. The clock is

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running out for another reason, too: Same-sex marriage is rapidly being normalized, culturally and legally. Many same-sex couples already consider themselves married, and expect to be treated as such. In many jurisdictions they are—more or less, depending on how many concessions the law has made to them on adoption, survivors' benefits, and the like. Canada says that they are married and Vermont that they are as good as married; Massachusetts is set to go the Canadian route.

For the time being, most Americans are convinced that Ralph cannot really marry Andrew, and that the law should not let them. This conviction is entirely consistent with the view (held by most Americans) that consenting adults should be left alone in their bedrooms. But Justice Scalia is surely right that "many Americans do not want [openly gay] persons . . . as partners in their business, as scoutmasters for their children . . . or as boarders in their home." Or as the newlyweds next door.

The premise of the majority opinion in *Lawrence*, however, is that it is unfair to prevent homosexuals from benefiting from any of life's valuable opportunities and pursuits—family relations, employment, education, and, yes, even marriage. Homosexuals' free enjoyment of these goods is impeded by laws such as Texas had. This "discrimination both in the public and in the private spheres" (the majority's words) is "invited" by criminalizing sodomy.

The logic of the majority goes like this: Said "discrimination" is unconstitutional (or, some kind of wrong the Court is authorized to eliminate); the Texas law contributes to this discrimination; therefore, the Texas law is unconstitutional. The Court overturned *Bowers* v. *Hardwick* because, it seems, doing so was thought to be instrumental to the full and equal participation of homosexuals in all walks of American life, including the family.

THE LAW AS MORAL ENFORCER

What then is to be done? Conservatives must hold the defensive lines—in state courts, in legislatures, in corporate America—as best they can. These efforts will come to naught, however, if the Court stays its course. Of the majority's halfhearted denial that their decision in *Lawrence* commits them to upholding same-sex marriage, Justice Scalia warns: "Do not believe it." The only way to rein in this runaway Court is to change the supreme positive law: the Constitution. The Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) would impose upon willful justices—and every other public actor in the land—a definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The amendment would leave legislatures free to extend some benefits to non-marital households. But courts could not.

In the looming fight over the FMA, conservatives should emphasize that marriage is a crucial common good and not a raw majoritarian preference that is binding upon the unwilling by dint of superior will. The *Lawrence* dissents do not help here. Neither Justice Scalia nor Justice Thomas overcame the winner-take-all understanding of marriage and the polity wherein majorities are entitled to impose their personal preferences in the matter.

The question now is how to persuade the American citizenry about what we should do. Will we persuade them to support the FMA by saying that it is "our" preference, which we are able to impose upon homosexuals? Is that a good enough reason? Is it a reason at all?

Marriage is not just "our" way, which we happen to be strong enough to impose upon "them." Our civil law has always treated traditional marriage as reflecting objective truths about human sexuality, procreation, and the family. Some people deny these truths, just as some people deny that education and human life are goods. Our laws nonetheless presuppose that life and education are common goods to be supported and respected by everybody. In the same way, marriage depends for its health partly on sound laws that protect, maintain, and support it. Marriage is not a completely private matter. If it were, we would not be fighting this battle: Homosexuals want their relationships legally, that is, publicly, recognized as marriages because it matters.

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The task of conservatives in the coming showdown is to justify, not marriage *qua* marriage (almost everyone, gay and straight, agrees that marriage is a good thing), but the characteristic at its core: its intrinsic gender complementarity—one man and one woman, period. Here again the dissents do not help. Justice Thomas says nothing about it. Justice Scalia seems to say that the law limits marriage to one man and one woman because of society's "moral disapprobation of homosexual conduct" (and says that the Court's majority deems that motive unconstitutional). What would be the reasoned basis for that "disapprobation"? Feelings of repulsion won't do, since feelings are not reasons at all.

The answer is that homosexual acts are not and never can be marital. Sodomy has been discouraged, and sometimes prohibited, for basically the same reason that fornication and adultery have been: to protect marriage as the principle, or litmus line, of sexual morality. Sex is for marriage, and marriage is (not coincidentally) the morally legitimate

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setting for bringing children into the world.

This is not rocket science. In the 1960s, even as the Court was becoming complicit in the sexual revolution, it still regularly upheld the view that protecting marriage was a reasonable basis for civil law. Justice Harlan—no old fogey by the standards of the day—opined that civil law enforced the proper "societal context" for having and raising kids. He argued further that "laws forbidding adultery, fornication and homosexual practices . . . express the negative" of that proposition. In other words, law protects marriage by (among many other measures) discouraging non- and extra-marital sex—including "consensual" same-sex acts "having little or no direct impact on others." Nowhere did Harlan say that a state must prohibit all immoral sex if it is to prohibit any. And so the rational basis of laws such as Texas had was to protect and promote marriage, if in a very limited way.

In *Griswold* v. *Connecticut* (1965), the decision that recognized married couples' privacy regarding contraceptives, Harlan voted with the majority. Nevertheless, he believed that laws confining sexuality to marriage "form a pattern so deeply pressed into the substance of our social life that any constitutional doctrine [of privacy] must build upon that basis" (an opinion he articulated in a 1961 preview of *Griswold*). And the Court did. *Griswold* was all about marital privacy. *Eisenstadt* v. *Baird* opened up contraceptive availability to the unmarried in 1972, but also stated twice that the state could still treat extra- and non-marital sex as "evils" that could be criminalized. *Roe* was about unwanted pregnancy; it was not as such about either marriage or the single life. The *Lawrence* majority claimed these, and some other, cases as authority for their spectacular new right to sexual expression. In truth, before June 2003, the Supreme Court had never held that anyone has a right to engage in sex outside lawful marriage. Never.

THE TIE THAT BINDS

The question facing the American public is this: What about marriage makes it impossible for a man to marry another man? For Scalia, the answer cannot be procreation, "since the sterile and the elderly are allowed to marry." Well, what can man and woman do that man and man can never do? Anyone can see that two (or more) persons of the same sex can set up a household, and even acquire children whose diapers they change. But persons of the same sex can never form a mated pair, be the originators of human reproduction, engage in sexual acts open to new life, have children who are, literally, the embodiment of their—the couple's—two-in-one-flesh union. Children can never be the "issue" (the classic legal term) of any same-sex act. The procreative orientation of marriage makes possible the awesome web of valuable relationships we call the family.

The marital union of man and woman provides, as nothing else can, the context (as Harlan put it) for the decent procreation and proper education of children; the civil law protects marriage largely for this purpose. "Proper" does not refer principally to children's IQ scores, their grades, their emotional adjustment, or their peer relationships. Hawaii tried to prove in same-sex-marriage litigation several years ago that "gay" households handicapped kids—in strictly non-moral, mostly psychological ways—in school and in life. It was a disaster; even the state's experts couldn't show that it was so.

The proper rearing of children concerns their moral education by experience and example. The enduring reproductive union of a man and a woman establishes a world of valuable relationships that same-sex households can only mimic. In the marital household we find a nexus of interwoven relationships—husband and wife, mother and father, father and daughter, mother and son, brother and sister, etc.—and all the moral obligations and opportunities these relationships imply.

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Although the spouses' complementarity goes beyond mere biology, this biological substratum provides an essential bond between family members. By their marital acts, the couple expresses in a profound and special way their whole married life together: They are truly two-in-one-flesh. When their marital acts bear the fruit of children, these children (literally) issue from the marriage; they are the embodiment and thereby the extension into space and time of the parents' union. Mother and father are, equally and exclusively, parents of all their children; all of the children are equally and wholly the offspring of the same parents. This family-wide equality and mutuality constitutes a unique natural bond, one that is the wellspring of love, duty, loyalty, and care-giving—the whole matrix of family life. Nothing can replace it.

No society's idea of how a husband, or an eldest daughter, or a grandson should behave is beyond criticism. But being a wife and mother, for example, is not just about assuming a socially constructed role. It is a natural moral reality upon which culture—and law—rightly supervenes, and in so doing structures, specifies, reinforces, and protects an awesome opportunity to live a good life. Sound civil law protects and promotes all such natural, morally valuable opportunities for human flourishing, keeping them alive, intact, and available for subsequent generations. **NR**

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■ IRAQ

The Daunting Aftermath

L. Paul Bremer & Co. have a different kind of war on their hands

ADAM GARFINKLE

JUST how much trouble are we and our erstwhile British allies in now that the aftermath of the Iraq war has taken on such a dour coloration? The answer rather depends on what one means by "trouble," and on what one means by "we."

As to the latter, "we" can be taken narrowly to mean certain political principals. Prime Minister Blair and President Bush have been harmed by how things are going, the former pretty obviously so, but the latter more than American political handicappers are wont thus far to admit. One really can imagine a situation, come next autumn, where both Blair and Bush will have been cast into the ether of premature retirement, while Gerhard Schröder, Jacques Chirac, and Vladimir Putin—all still in power—look on in amusement.

If "we" means the interested and invested American and British bodies politic, the picture is no prettier. It is still the official line in Washington and London that establishing a democracy in Iraq will occur, no matter how difficult, no matter how costly, no matter how long it takes. The Coalition's man in Baghdad, L. Paul Bremer III, has put a brave and resolute face on the effort, as well he should. He and his superiors now have no choice, at least not before November 2004. Since the WMD plot has not turned out as vividly as many expected it to, a great deal more weight in vindicating the decision to go to war now rests on quick and significant political progress in Iraq than would otherwise have been the case. Just finding mass graves won't cut it for long. But that quick and significant progress is exactly what "we" do not see.

This brings us to what we mean by trouble, the key question here being this: How much does the unexpectedly poor start at reconstructing Iraq prejudice the ultimate outcome? Will hard work, sacrifice, money, and patience still win the day, or, as some now claim, have we missed a window that will not again open?

ARAB DOMINOES?

If we do get the security situation under control, the economy moving, and competent if not entirely liberal institutions growing, most will soon forget the mess of the past two months, just as they have mostly forgotten the unexpected problems of the first ten days of the war. We may then bring about a better Iraq, even if not a wholly democratic one, and that will be important for a variety of reasons—not least to reduce American reliance on Saudi Arabia and gain leverage over it with respect to a bulging portfolio of issues. But a better Iraq will not necessarily bring about political liberalization, or even improvement, elsewhere in the Arab and Muslim worlds. It certainly cannot do so in and of itself. Indeed, success in Iraq could bring some very untoward consequences elsewhere.

Some liberalizing currents, especially in the Arab Gulf, may be strengthened by a Coalition political success in Iraq. Movement toward genuine democracy in the only Muslim country in the region where it is possible anytime soon—Iran—may also be advanced. But the authoritarian regimes that litter the region will incline to repress reformist tendencies in their own countries, at least the tendencies they themselves do not control. One result of this will be more social polarization in already dysfunctional political systems. Another result will be more guilt-by-association for the U.S., unless Washington decides to abandon these regimes precisely when they are most vulnerable to Islamist challenges—not likely, one would hope. Still another may be increased Islamist mobilization, and hence more violence in the region and, quite possibly, more terrorism directed outside of it. In short, "we" could do quite well in Iraq in due course and still exacerbate the problem—apocalyptical terrorism—that sent us there in the first place.

As trouble goes, that's the best-case scenario. If we end up instead with an insurgency we cannot staunch, there is little reason to hope for any benign outcome. The search-and-arrest raids that have been conducted lately in the Sunni areas of Iraq are not the same as the search-and-destroy attrition strategy that played out so disastrously in Vietnam, but they bear an unnerving resemblance to them as far as their political outcome is concerned. The vast majority of Sunnis loathes us. The American and British militaries look to Iraqis like an occupation army that can't prevent itself from being bloodied, but act like police who cannot keep the peace or protect their Iraqi friends. This is the worst possible combination one could want to win hearts and minds in the Iraqi heartland.

If we cannot get a grip on the Sunni areas, the so far cautious (and divided) Shiites will smell opportunity that will only advance their organizing energies. The Kurds will see no choice but to circle the wagons and begin thinking parochially about their own interest. We will have set the stage for a civil war, either one we are in the middle of trying to control, or one we bug out of to our humiliation. The general effect of civil war on the region will be to devastate American credibility and start a feeding frenzy, by Islamist terrorists and others, on American interests and allies worldwide. Now this is really trouble.

And it is, by the way, not the *number* of Coalition troops in Iraq that is so important to preventing such a scenario, but what those troops are trained and asked to do. American soldiers are trained to be warriors, and they are very good at it. But getting the bad guys is hard when they can hide amid a population determined to protect them. Our soldiers are not trained to be utility engineers, bankers, mayors, and policemen in a place where they can't even read the alphabet let alone speak the lan-

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guage. They are brash, as well they should be for the jobs they train for, they are far from home, and they are increasingly uncomfortable and unhappy broiling in the Mideastern sun. In such circumstances, they will not endear themselves to Iraqis, or otherwise be in a position to do much good.

Meanwhile, Bernard B. Kerik, the former police commissioner of New York City, is in Iraq making headway organizing an Iraqi police force. The trouble is not only that his recruits have become Baathist targets, but that he arrived only on May 18. About six weeks earlier, someone in the Office of the Secretary of Defense reportedly turned aside a proposal to bring a significant number of military police into Iraq. Which brings us to the postwar planning screw-up that explains much of the present mess.

When Ambassador Bremer says that there was and is nothing wrong with the postwar reconstruction plan, but that it is just damned difficult to implement it under the circumstances, he is telling at least half the truth. As to the other half, he's just doing his job, and doing it as well, probably, as anyone could. But let's face it: Jerry Bremer isn't Brer Rabbit, we're not Brer Foxes, and Iraq ain't no briar patch. What happened, basically, is that a combination of bad intelligence, wishful thinking, and bureaucratic misorganization combined to produce what has until recently looked like maximum feasible mayhem.

FOG OF THE POST-WAR

The Pentagon came to the belief that it was possible to decapitate the Baathist regime and then find a grateful population with its functional capacities intact, all ready to move on to a better future. The decapitation strategy was wise; there was no reason to bloody the Iraqi army, as opposed to the Republican and Special Republican Guards. The army was the one institution in the country with nationalist credentials that could, if necessary, help hold the place together. This is why General Jay Garner, the first Coalition administrator in country, spoke optimistically of "three months, up and out." He did not invent this intent; he simply expressed the expectations of his superiors. That is also why no one felt any particularly great need to get Garner and his team in-country all that quickly. But the Baath was hard to decapitate at the outset and it was hard not to bloody the army, for its officers had been assigned Baathist commissar shadows who put guns to their backs. By the second week in April, the Baath elected to melt away rather than fight and die. When the Baath melted, so did everything else, and it is something of a mystery why such an outcome was not anticipated. The Sunni tribes from which the Baath cadres came are caravan raiders and plunderers from way back. The fedayeen-like fighting they did during the war is akin to what they have done for centuries. They ambush for loot, not fight for military victory in the classical sense, and certainly they have no interest in martyrdom for the fatherland in the face of a vastly superior military force—in other words, suicide.

U.S. soldiers control a demonstration in Baghdad, July 2003

KARIM SABH/AFP PHOTO

Meanwhile, too, Iraq is a segmented society whose modernity has always been a thin veneer on a tribal society. It is about the farthest thing one can imagine, sociologically speaking, from Germany or Japan circa 1945. That veneer wore away to near nothing thanks to 30 years of Baathist thuggery and terror, so when the terror gave way, the society reverted to its most natural mode of social organization: the tribe, reinforced by religious affiliation.

Those who told us how cosmopolitan and sophisticated Iraqi civic culture was before the Baath, and how Iraq therefore had such advantages in becoming a coherent, liberal society, underestimated both how much damage the Baath did and how much has changed in Baghdad since the end of the Hashemite monarchy. The refined, tolerant, inviting metropolis of their imagination was a place where many British and other Europeans still lived. It was a place where the Arab elite sent their scions to London, not Moscow, for study. A bit earlier, it was a place where the Ottoman civil-servant tradition still held sway, and where, as late as 1950, nearly a third of the population was Jewish. This Baghdad, and hence this Iraq, has been dead for a long time.

Pity poor General Garner, then, who expected to operate in what the Pentagon calls a permissive environment, only to find all sorts of people shooting at his interagency team, and blowing up and stealing infrastructure by the truckload. Even with piles of Baathist stolen money being found all over the country, Garner couldn't get permission to spend much of it to jump-start the economy, as he rightly wanted to do. Meanwhile, few of his staff ventured far or often out of the palace in which they were bivouacked, giving rise to the specter of news conferences in which now disembedded American and British reporters knew more about what was going on in the country than did the briefers.

BREMER'S CHALLENGES

When Ambassador Bremer arrived, he carried with him certain advantages. First, he saw realistically what the situation had become. Second, he had authority to make decisions, derived

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directly from the president and the secretary of defense, that General Garner lacked. Third, he possessed a level of political sophistication that is the sine qua non for understanding the job, let alone succeeding in it.

But these advantages have not made his life easy. Several circles begging to be squared now loom before him. He is sympathetic to minimizing America's symbolic profile in Iraq; surely he understands the resentment problem. But he understands as well the problem of credibility and the critical importance of basic security, without which nothing else can be achieved. So what does he tell the troops to do: hunker down and pack up for home, or go get the bad guys? Or, improbably, both?

More important, he realizes the importance of putting an Iraqi face on the reconstruction effort. But he also knows that premature elections could put the wrong faces on it: either exiles who lack the ability to run the country, or those still loyal to Saddam or backed by the Iranian mullahs whose views of Iraq's future would be little or no improvement on its recent past. So does he appoint officials or allow elections, and, if the latter, under what conditions? Is it better to let the Iraqis put their own people in place and then have to remove them if they turn out wrong, or not to allow wrong people into office in the first place?

dispirited by management and personnel deficiencies (many of them imposed by Congress), and been left too bereft of policy leadership in its middle ranks to fill the gap. But the State Department isn't set up for contracting out policemen and rebuilding electricity grids either. When something is no one's job, the job doesn't get gone, at least not very well.

The moral of this particular story, then, is that one should be careful about accepting what to all appearances, if not intentions, is an imperial vocation in the absence of a Colonial Office. In such a situation, even Winston Churchill, who, along with Sir Percy Cox and Gertrude Bell, "made" Iraq just over 80 years ago, would have been flummoxed.

A good deal of the trouble we're in was foreseeable. This has to be the case, because some people, in fact, foresaw it. Does that mean the war was a mistake? No, for two reasons. First, the dangers of letting a regime like Saddam's slither and sneak its way to WMD capabilities were simply too great to countenance. (Just because we haven't discovered barrels full of toxic goop, by the way, doesn't mean the Baath was innocent of such motives or programs.) Even the problems we have now are preferable to the risks we would have run from continued inaction. But second, the trouble we're in would have been far less

The questions 'how long will we be there?' and 'how much will it cost?' are literally unanswerable. They are also very optimistic questions, because they presume a more or less happy ending.

Perhaps most important, Bremer knows the Coalition cannot build a decent Iraq unless it is de-Baathicized at least to some extent. But without the Sunni technocrats there is no one to run the country except Americans and Brits who, being mostly soldiers, don't know how. So how deep should lustration go? Formally banning the Baath party and disbanding the armed forces were bold moves, and there is a logic to them. But such decisions may have created a community of the politically martyred that includes Baathists who know how to organize and dismissed soldiers who know how to use weapons and explosives. It is not idle speculation that the growing sophistication and lethality of Iraqi guerrilla attacks against Coalition forces in recent days owes its origin to just such a "community."

All of this should explain why the questions "how long will we be there?" and "how much will it cost?" are literally unanswerable. They are also very optimistic questions, because they presume a more or less happy ending. We have not missed a "window"; success is still possible. But the darned thing has nearly broken our fingers whilst swinging in the desert wind.

Speaking of broken things, the Pentagon is superb at breaking what needs breaking. It is not well set up, however, for fixing: for doing police work, civil-engineering projects, and public administration far from home. It has resisted bureaucratically being made to do such things over many years, and it shows. Meanwhile, the State Department has been starved of funds,

had decapitation worked (and it might have), and, even more important, had the transition from the military to the reconstruction phase been planned and implemented more competently. Bremer is right to say that what we are trying to do is very hard. He is too much a diplomat to admit that we've made it much harder than it needed to be.

Withal, we must soldier on, for the alternative is too gruesome to contemplate. We must stabilize the military situation in the Sunni areas, but without brutalizing the innocent, even as we maintain effective liaison with the Shiite and Kurdish communities as they position themselves against the future. Coalition diktats notwithstanding, we should "rehire" the army quickly and make as many exceptions as necessary in bringing former Baathists-under-duress into the new Iraqi administration. We must get the economy up and running as soon as possible, while putting an Iraqi face on the reconstruction effort. For these tasks, we should swallow our distaste for certain parties and associated personalities and endeavor to internationalize the effort as best we can. It was Churchill (who else?) who said that the only thing harder than working with allies was trying to work without them. Right again. Meanwhile, someone should give thought to how to make post-combat tasks more coherent bureaucratically than they are now. We will create a kinder and gentler Iraq, even if not a liberal-democratic one. We have given ourselves no choice. **NR**

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■ PAST AND PRESENT

The Two Europes

How Jacques Chirac got that way—and why others (blessedly) are different

MICHAEL KNOX BERAN

THE question was European farm policy, the setting a European Union summit. Tony Blair, the British prime minister, was lamenting the hollowness of the EU's professed commitment to free trade. How, Blair wondered, could the EU justify its lavish subsidies to European farmers?

This was too much for Jacques Chirac. The French president apparently regarded Blair's criticism of Europe's Common Agricultural Policy as a personal insult. (French farmers are among the program's prime beneficiaries.) "You've been very rude to me," Chirac was quoted as telling Blair afterward. "No one has ever spoken to me like this." He was also reported to have accused Blair of being "badly brought up."

You know the "concert of Europe" is seriously out of tune when the president of the French Republic talks to the head of Her Majesty's Government this way. Yet the incident, memorable though it was, was only the prelude to a more spectacular and more protracted dispute—the squabbling, name-calling, and backstabbing that took place in Europe in the months preceding the Iraq war. That cacophonous melodrama revealed the emergent idea of "Euroland" to be a sentimental myth—so much intellectual cotton-candy, altogether inadequate to the task of bridging Europe's ancient divisions.

Bouffes though they might have been, these examples of comic theater revealed that there really *are* two Europes. It's time to abandon the fiction of European unity and admit that Secretary Rumsfeld was right. Europe *is* divided. And it's time to recognize that the United States has an interest in preserving this division: America will benefit from the continued existence of a severed Continent.

If Britain and other "Anglosphere" nations like the United States and Australia seek to advance free markets and individual liberty, France lies at the heart of another European tradition: It grew up near the center of the old Roman imperium, and in its infancy it absorbed the centralizing, state-glorifying ethos of the Romans. The Greek colonies in southern Gaul, in what is now France, sought protection from the Roman Republic in the 2nd century B.C.; by the 1st century A.D. much of Gaul was Romanized. Southern Germany was hardly less so: The Empire's northern boundary extended to the Rhine and the Danube. The land on which Augsburg, Munich, Salzburg, and Vienna sit was once thoroughly Roman, and the Latin language was for many centuries predominant there. Britain, by contrast, was a remote dependency of Rome, the last of the Empire's European conquests, the first to fall away when the Empire began to buckle.

With the civilizing virtues of Rome's imperium came many vices. Nations like France, Italy, and Spain grew up in what was once the cradle of the Roman world, and they have long cherished collectivist Roman patterns of organization. The Mediterranean ideal of corporate solidarity and communal purpose had, in an earlier era, exalted city-states like Athens to the pinnacle of human excellence; but when the Romans undertook to implement, on a much grander scale, a similarly rigorous program of public power, the result was to stifle liberty.

The Romans knew what they were doing: They used the old civic bridles to tame their recalcitrant provinces. First, the Romans broke down the will power of provincial elites. The imperial magistrates artfully seduced their subject peoples with the blandishments of state-subsidized luxury. Passing their days in a voluptuous regimen of baths and lethargy, the subjugated peoples lost their independent spirit, and they shuddered at the wild aboriginal liberty of their cousins who remained outside the Roman imperium. In no place was the disdain for the uncouth barbarians more pronounced than in *Gallia Togata* (Romanized Gaul), where the toga-wearing elite sneered at *Gallia Comata*—the Gaul of the Longhairs, those mountain yokels who had not adopted Roman manners.

The architects of Rome's Empire not only promoted, in their subject peoples, the languid arts of indolence, they also removed whatever incentives to laborious industry remained by monopolizing trade. Roman magistrates brought to the provinces a highly centralized administration and a strict regulation of commerce, as well as trade restraints that discouraged manufactures, slowed the development of an independent mercantile class, and encouraged an early form of crony-capitalism. High taxes enabled the Romans to support a lavish public-arts program; the work of constructing temples and amphitheaters not only magnified the glory of the state, it also absorbed the energies of the artisan classes, those citizens whose useful activity always poses a threat to badly governed states.

FROM ABSOLUTISM TO SOCIALISM

The Roman belief that public power does a better job of coordinating human effort than private liberty profoundly affected the subsequent development of Romano-Europe. Good Romans like Caesar and Crassus prepared the way for Good Europeans like Louis XIV, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, and Jacques Chirac.

In creating French absolutism Louis XIV followed a Roman model. He broke down the provincial elites with techniques that would have been familiar to the Romans: At Versailles the nobles passed their days in a splendid servitude. The Sun King's building projects both kept the artisan classes occupied and promoted the monarch's own cult of personality. The regime's neo-Roman style gave a classical finish to the absolutist government, and the genius of Racine, Poussin, and Le Vau was recruited to glorify the pretensions of state. Under Colbert, Louis XIV's finance minister, commerce was more rigorously regulated than at any time since the fall of the Roman Empire. According to one historian, no

Mr. Beran's book, *Jefferson's Demons*, will be published in the fall.

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"directed effort to develop a nation's industrial life" on the scale of Colbert's would be seen again until the "inauguration of the five-year plan by the Soviet government in Russia."

Every time "an attempt is made to do away with absolutism," Tocqueville said, "the most that could be done has been to graft the head of Liberty onto a servile body." During the French Revolution, the revolutionaries followed the Roman rules even more scrupulously than the absolutists. The French Republic, Tocqueville observed, exercised "powers wider, stricter, and more absolute than those which any French king had ever wielded. . . . Never since the fall of the Roman Empire had the world seen a government so highly centralized." Patriotic solidarity in the Roman tradition, not individual liberty in the Anglo-American one, was the ideal the revolutionaries cherished. "It is a remarkable fact," Tocqueville wrote, "that of all the ideas and aspirations which led up to the Revolution, the concept and desire of personal liberty, in the full sense of the term, were the last to emerge, as they were the first to pass away." The revolutionaries adopted the Roman belief that freedom lies in the citizen's opportunity to serve the state; they repudiated the Anglo-American idea that liberty lies in the citizen's freedom of action in a private sphere.

The trend toward centralization continued even after the examples of Louis XIV and Bonaparte became obsolete. In the 19th century, French and German thinkers worked out a new program of communal solidarity. The French led the way: Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Enfantin were among the earliest advocates of socialism. But the movement's momentum soon passed to Germans like Lassalle, Marx, and Engels, who worked out a more theoretically elaborate ideal of coercive communitarianism. In Germany the socialists found fertile pasturage for their neo-Roman orthodoxy, for although the German lands beyond the Rhine and the Danube had never been Roman provinces, Frederick the Great, a notorious Francophile, had in the 18th century turned Prussia into an absolutist state modeled on the Sun King's France. Otto von Bismarck began his own epochal career as a defender of Frederican absolutism. In time, however, Bismarck saw that by combining socialism with another revolutionary movement, nationalism, he could create a more popular and durable form of authoritarian government. A decade after he united the German nation, the Iron Chancellor laid the foundation for the quasi-socialist *Wohlfahrtsstaat.*

Adolf Hitler continued the program of National Socialism. Hitler was by birth and inclination a Romano-European. He always thought of Linz, just south of the Danube, as his hometown; according to Percy Ernst Schramm, who served as historian to the Wehrmacht command during World War II, the Nazi leader "was completely rooted within the cultural boundaries of the old Roman Empire. He clung to the civilization of the Mediterranean and took no part in his followers' grotesque glorification of the Teutons." Hitler was convinced, the historian John Lukacs wrote, that "modern populist nationalism can—indeed must—be socialistic." The "Führer" was full of workers'-utopia schemes for Autobahns and Peoples' Cars (hence the *Volks-Wagen*); he intended to make Berlin and Linz into Roman-style showcases for his regime. (Albert Speer was deputed to design the ponderous neoclassical temples.)

ROMANO-EUROPE TODAY

The spirit of the Romans and the Sun King, Frederick and Bismarck survives in Romano-Europe. The German economy sags under the weight of the nation's bloated welfare state. The French Fifth Republic is a neo-Roman state with an imperial presidency, a highly centralized system of interlocking bureaucracies, and a vast and economically ruinous social-welfare establishment. So much bread, so many circuses, so many arts programs. The French leadership is trained exclusively in a few state-run schools that promote the secular cult of "La République." (The Roman principle again: Give the elite togas, and they will do the state's bidding.) Those inducted into the upper echelons of the bureaucracy are guaranteed a lifetime of good living, their luxurious *joie de vivre* financed in part by a system of mandarin cronyism.

The politicians look after their favorite companies, granting them privileges that discourage competition and invite corruption. Sometimes the self-dealing comes to light. Jean-Claude Méry, a French political fixer who died in 1999, claimed that as mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars in kickbacks from companies that received state contracts. Former French prime minister Alain Juppé received sweetheart deals on Parisian apartments for himself and his family; one of his apartments was renovated at a cost of over $200,000, though Juppé paid nothing. Officials of Elf Aquitaine, the state-controlled oil company, allegedly gave millions of dollars in kickbacks to the mistress of Roland Dumas, one of François Mitterrand's courtiers. (The courtesan in question styled herself the "whore of the Republic.") In the resulting scandal Dumas defended the practice of "retro-commissions," as the bribes are called.

Mandarin cronyism isn't limited to direct pay-offs. Powerful public figures find ways to feed friends and family at the public trough. As a European Union commissioner, former French prime minister Edith Cresson put a favorite dentist on the EU payroll as an "AIDS expert." A true Romano-European chauvinist (she once alleged that a quarter of Anglo-Saxon men are homosexual), Cresson was also rebuked by investigators for presiding over the waste of millions of dollars earmarked for "youth programs."

Corruption is not, of course, unknown in the U.S. and Britain. But French markets, hobbled by restraints, are not nearly as efficient in detecting and punishing malfeasance. When Balzac said that behind every great fortune lies a great crime, he was writing from a Romano-European perspective. The same government interference in business that encourages corruption stifles growth and discourages innovation. Though premised on the idea that centralized public power is less wasteful than Anglo-American methods of coordinating human endeavor, Romano-European governments leave a larger proportion of their populations unemployed. (The unemployment rate in France stands at 9 percent, a figure that does not include the large and unproductive proportion of Frenchmen on the public payroll.) In the absence of opportunity, some turn to scapegoating. The persistence of anti-Semitism in Romano-Europe cannot be understood apart from the region's deteriorating economic prospects.

WHY THEY RESIST

What the Romano-European political classes fear most is a revolution like that Margaret Thatcher led in Britain. If their subject peoples—frustrated by high unemployment and limited economic growth—ever *did* rise up and overthrow the coercive Romano-European governments, a lot of powerful people would be out of togas (not to mention luxury apartments). Such a revolution is not

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implausible; the support which Spanish prime minister José María Aznar offered the United States during the Iraq crisis must have caused the well-coiffed hairs of courtiers in the Elysée Palace and the Quai d'Orsay to stand on end. In its heritage and traditions Spain is as much a Romano-European state as France, but on the question of Iraq it broke decisively with its Romano-European cousin. Italy, too, offered the United States valuable assistance during the crisis.

The ability of the mandarin castes in Romano-Europe to maintain power depends on their ability to preserve the illusion that their system represents a viable alternative to the Anglo-American model that many in "new" Europe, less rooted in the Romano-European tradition, seek to embrace. In challenging the United States over Iraq, President Chirac surely knew that he stood little chance of persuading President Bush to change course. Yet here was a means of demonstrating to the world that, whatever its faults as an engine of economic progress, the Romano-European state nevertheless embodies a higher type of civilization than that of the Anglo-Americans.

Chirac shrewdly exploited the old conceit that the Romano-European peoples are more *spirituels* than the barbarians from the north. Nietzsche once said that France was the "seat of the most spiritual and sophisticated culture in Europe"—*Gallia Togata.* Nietzsche viewed Romano-Europe as a bulwark against the English, who with their "shopkeeper's" philosophy, their "profound normality," their lack of "real profundity of spiritual perception," had brought about an "overall depression of the European spirit," the "doltification of the world." By opposing the Americans and the British, Chirac let the world know that Romano-Europe was still fighting the good fight of the togas against the "*rosbifs.*"

It was an inspired exercise in salesmanship. Intellectuals of various stripes rallied to Chirac's standard and argued that Romano-Europe—the same civilization that gave the world absolutism, Bonapartism, socialism, National Socialism, fascism, and Francoism—is somehow morally superior to the coarser civilization of the "Anglosphere." Writing in the English *Spectator,* Gerald Warner suggested that contemporary Islamic civilization, with its "close-knit family life" and "spirit of martyrdom," is in many ways superior to the civilization that America—the "self-imposed . . . arbiter of the New World Order"—seeks to impose: "McDonald's burger bars, rap music, sexual license, individualism demolishing family life and consumerism banishing all sense of religion." As long as men like President Chirac can persuade the chattering classes that in defending Romano-European traditions they are resisting a shallow American materialism, they will find useful support in their effort to prevent would-be Mrs. Thatchers from rising up to take them down.

We know now that the fall of the Berlin Wall was not the "end of history." One of the critical conflicts of the modern era—the struggle between Anglo-American and Romano-European systems of governance—goes on. In order to protect its own domestic regimes, Romano-Europe will continue to undermine American efforts to introduce prosperous forms of order in the world's troubled places. Local elites in the Middle East and Africa will naturally be attracted to Romano-European models of government: Such models, while they give subject populations enough freedom to satisfy Western aid criteria, enable the old pashas to maintain their privileged places. The republics of central and south America, which exhibit some of the worst characteristics of Romano-European political organization, are also natural allies for the decrepit regimes of "old" Europe.

It is in America's interest to frustrate Romano-European initiatives wherever practicable and to resist the aspirations of the principal Romano-European states, France and Germany, to hegemony in Europe. A corollary of this is that America should seek to preserve a divided Europe. If a European superstate *were* to emerge from the current Brussels-based EU bureaucracy, it would almost certainly be organized on collectivist Romano-European lines. The resulting marginalization of Britain would be a terrific blow to the cause of liberty; at the same time, the United States would confront a vast continental power constructed on principles in many ways inimical to America's own. Such a power would undoubtedly find sympathizers. It might, for example, succeed in organizing the Greens and the anti-globalizing fringers into a fifth column dedicated to the preservation of Romano-European communitarianism. China would of course be a more formidable potential ally for the new Europe; were China to choose the Romano-European model as more suited to its Confucian traditions than the Anglo-American one, Romano-Europe would be back in business as a world-shaking historical force.

It is in America's interest to frustrate Romano-European initiatives wherever practicable.

America can forestall these bleak possibilities by exploiting divisions within the Romano-European community itself. It is too soon to tell whether Spain and Italy are indeed ready to break with traditions of mandarin cronyism masquerading as social solidarity. The legacies of Franco in Spain and Mussolini in Italy will make the task of house-cleaning difficult. Silvio Berlusconi offered President Bush support during the Iraq crisis, but at home he stands accused of engaging in the kind of corruption that is so familiar a feature of the Romano-European system. And yet the willingness of Aznar and Berlusconi to break with their cousins in France and Germany is nevertheless significant, and may indicate a genuine desire for change.

President Clinton's instinct was to paper over differences between Romano-Europe and the "Anglosphere." The "Third Way" was an attempt to find a middle ground between the coercive solidarity of France, Germany, and Italy and the free-market liberalism of the United States and Margaret Thatcher's Britain. Yet such compromises are always dangerous. During the last century the inheritors of classical liberalism in both the United States and Britain responded to the challenge of Romano-European socialism by compromising their own principles of liberty. Nanny-state liberals in both countries wove socialist threads into the fabric of their free constitutions. The results were unfortunate. Rather than make peace with the Romano-European tradition, America should seek to bury it. **NR**

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the long view

ROB LONG

Saddam Hussein: The Audio Outtakes

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Okay, sir, we're ready to go here in the booth. Do you need some water or something before we start?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "No, no. I am ready."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Bathroom or anything?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "I said I am ready. Are we rolling tape or what?"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Okay, then. Roll tape. This is Saddam Hussein, Address to the People of Iraq, Take One."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "People of Iraq! This is your Lord and Master! Tremble before me, you miserable dogs! Did you think me dead, you slavish cowards? Did you soil yourself at the approach of the American invaders? Have your women become—"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Excuse me, sir?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "What is wrong? Is the reel-to-reel not working?"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "No, hey, no problem technology-wise. It's just that, you know, we're sitting here in the booth, and I gotta tell you, the address is sounding a little . . . angry to us."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "I am angry."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Yeah, yeah, of course you are. I mean, we know you're angry and *they* know you're angry, but it's like . . . I think what we're all looking for in the booth is a kind of reconciliation-type thing. A bringing-us-together kind of tone."

UDAY'S VOICE: "Dad?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "What?"

UDAY'S VOICE: "Qusay has an idea here. He thinks it'll be more effective if you smile during the speech."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Smile?"

UDAY'S VOICE: "It might warm it up a bit."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "I think that's a fabulous idea."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Smile. Okay, I think I can smile. I mean, I want to come off likable."

UDAY'S VOICE: "Right. Right. That's really the key."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "But I'm not sure I can smile during the mountain-of-corpses-burning-in-the-night-sky-filling-the-air-with-the-putrifying-stench-of-the-smoking-flesh-of-our-treacherous-brethren part."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "We could strike that part. Maybe beef up the section on universal health care?"

UDAY'S VOICE: "Dad?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Yes, Uday?"

UDAY'S VOICE: "Qusay here thinks that during that part you might want to go for a kind of restrained anger. You know, like, you love your people and all, but some of them need to be punished and whatever."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Got it. Right. I like it. And for the rest of it a sort of warmer . . ."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Healing. Think healing. Time for the nation to come together. Time for reconciliation—"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Except for the mountain of corpses . . ."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Right, right. Except for that. It's smile, warm, heal, blah blah blah, reconcile, mountain of corpses, time to move on."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Got it. Got it. Let's lay it down."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "This is Saddam Hussein, Address to the People of Iraq, Take Two."

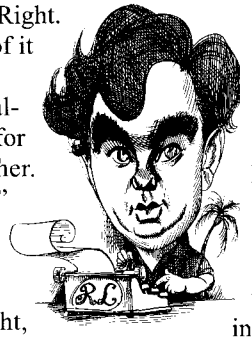
SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Greetings, fellow citizens! This is your leader and the father of modern Iraq, broadcasting from a secure and undisclosed location! Like many of you, I am gathering my strength to repel the American forces—"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Sir?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "What? I thought that one was good?"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "The tone was right—fatherly, firm, warm—and I really liked a lot of it, but I'm wondering if maybe we shouldn't reference the location specifically. It comes off weak, I think."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Weak?"



CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "We're drawing a word picture here. We want to make sure it's a strong one. Not you hiding out in some secret hideout like . . . like . . ."

UDAY'S VOICE: "Like a scaredy cat."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Was that Uday? Uday? Kid? You want to wear your ass as a hat? You little—"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Sir? Sir? I think what we're all going for here is the same thing. Quiet strength. Resolve. That sort of thing."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Fine. Fine. Tell the brat to stick a sock in it."

UDAY'S VOICE: "Okay. But stop improvising. Stick to the prepared text."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Don't lecture me, you miserable little—"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "This is Saddam Hussein's Address to the People of Iraq, Take Three."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "You're dead, you hear me? You're all dead! Dead! Dead! I'll bury you all myself, every last useless one of you! Get off your sorry asses and fight! Fight! Fight! I'm sitting here with one working lung and a couple of no-good sons and a head injury from where they knocked my flat-screen off the wall and do you hear me whining? Do you hear me crying and moaning and 'poor me'? No! No, you don't! Am I the only one in this freakin' country who still has a set? Am I? Am I? . . . I'm sorry. Too angry, right?"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Um . . . no, actually. It had a nice quality."

UDAY'S VOICE: "Dad?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "What?"

UDAY'S VOICE: "Qusay thinks—and I agree with him—that it had a realness, an authenticity that really connects. I think we should use it."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "I agree."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "It's not too Howard Dean?"

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Sir, it was very effective."

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Okay, then. You guys know best."

CONSULTANT'S VOICE: "Do you want to go ahead and lay down the version for the Kurds and the Shiites?"

SADDAM HUSSEIN: "Let me get some water first."

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HELP!!!!

"OPEN WIDE AND SAY: 'AAARRGGH'!"

U.S. CONSULATE —o— SAUDI ARABIA
YOU BETTER TAKE THAT DOWN...
LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND
U.S. KIDS HELD CAPTIVE BY SAUDIS
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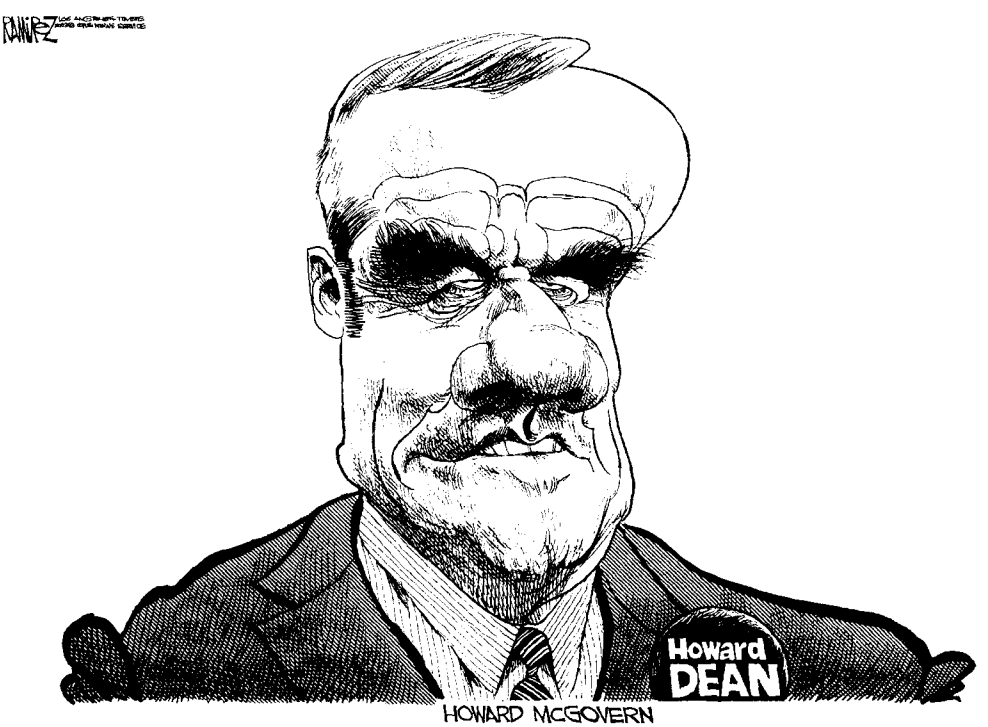
REUTERS PHOTO ARCHIVE

A day in the life of the Mayor of New York

THE MAHA-RUSHIE

When down in the dumps, and digestives
Don't settle the tummy, one turns
To Limbaugh, a nemesis leering
At Democrats and their concerns;
He talks from a chair that Attila
Would snuggle in, and, Friday last,
Foresaw, amidst yuks, Dr. Dean as
McGovern, reprising the past.

—W. H. VON DREELE



HOWARD MCGOVERN

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The Civilizing God

For the Glory of God: How Monotheism Led to Reformations, Science, Witch-Hunts, and the End of Slavery, by Rodney Stark (Princeton, 496 pp., $35)

DAVID KLINGHOFFER

Would the peoples of the Arab world be better off with a Bible in their hands or a Koran? In the recent debate about Christian evangelizing in Muslim lands, that's the question implicitly raised but rarely addressed in an explicit fashion. *Time* magazine devoted a cover story to the general subject—"Should Christians Convert Muslims?"—without ever touching on the most interesting and relevant point of all: the belief of Western missionaries that to Christianize is to civilize.

No one doubts that Muslims have a civilization, and a very impressive one in many ways. But Rodney Stark argues powerfully that the civilization of the Bible, of the Western nations, possesses advantages over those of the Koran and other non-Biblical religions precisely because Western culture emerged from Christian and Jewish Scripture.

A professor of sociology and comparative religion at the University of Washington, Stark is a brave guy. His publishers at Princeton University Press are brave too. To say the things he does in an academic setting, or to publish them, is to invite contempt from professional colleagues, or worse. The fact that he writes with a clarity and concision that make him a pleasure to read, never cloaking his message in jargon, with flashes of mischievous humor, makes it all the more likely he'll drive the "liberals" (his word) nuts.

Stark's main point is that in the development of a civilization, what counts is how the people think and feel about their gods. The transition from gods to God is a key step. Oddly, he doesn't make clear the profoundest implication of monotheism: If there is only one God, a God who cares about how people treat one another as well as about how they relate to Him, then that implies there can be only one transcendently true foundation on which all of ethics is built. Relativism becomes impossible.

But the rest of the consequences of monotheistic faith are drawn out here in detail and with vigor. This is no whitewash job. Two of Stark's four chapters deal frankly with consequences that may make Christians wince: sect-formation and witch-hunts. Believing in one universal Deity implies that others who profess different understandings of that God, or who engage in supernatural practices from the pre-monotheistic past (magic), are not only mistaken—but possibly have strayed into areas of belief that need to be forcibly suppressed.

Stark's most powerful chapter deals with the rise of science—which, he emphasizes, arose only once, in Europe and nowhere else, and as a direct result of the researches of medieval Catholic scholastics. This fact has been obscured by three centuries of "atheist attack[s] on faith," seeking to propagate the false notion that there is a necessary conflict between science and religion.

On the contrary: Science is the union of theory with empiricism—one without the other is not science but mere speculation or craft. Aristotle, for instance, is full of speculation, but he disdained empiricism. He reasoned that two rocks dropped from a height will fall at the same pace only if they weigh the same. A heavier rock will fall faster. This is of course false, as Aristotle would have known if he had tried dropping a big rock and a small one off a cliff.

A number of fondly held myths get demolished in this book. Stark acknowledges that medieval Islam preserved a knowledge of classical Greece and its culture (so did medieval Christian learning, albeit in Latin translation), but he points out that Muslim veneration of the Greek philosophers actually held the Arabs back: "The result was to freeze Islamic learning and stifle all possibility of the rise of an Islamic science, and for the same reasons that Greek learning stagnated of itself: fundamental assumptions antithetical to science." Science never took root in the Muslim world for the additional reason that Muslims lack a Biblical perspective on God. For believers in Biblical religion, God is the creator not only of existence, but of the laws of nature. To discover those laws is to meet Him through the medium of His creation. By contrast, "Islam did not fully embrace the notion that the universe ran along on fundamental principles laid down by God at the Creation, but assumed the world was sustained by his will on a continuing basis." There were, therefore, no general principles to discover—no theorizing to do. The same goes for Eastern faiths, which entirely lack the belief in a God as Creator.

Stark quotes John Maynard Keynes, commenting on the deeply held Christian faith of Isaac Newton: "[He] looked on the whole universe and all that is in it *as a riddle*, as a secret which could be read by applying pure thought to certain

Mr. Klinghoffer's new book is *The Discovery of God: Abraham and the Birth of Monotheism* (Doubleday).

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evidence, certain mystic clues which God had laid about the world to allow a sort of philosopher's treasure hunt. . . . He believed that these clues were to be found partly in the evidence of the heavens and in the constitution of elements . . . but also partly in certain papers and traditions handed down . . . in an unbroken chain back to the original cryptic revelation in Babylonia. He regarded the universe as a cryptogram set by the Almighty."

A "cryptogram set by the Almighty." This is a beautiful thought, rightly depicting science and religion as twinned disciplines, both seeking to find out God's secrets.

As a final instance of what religion has wrought in the West, Stark gives us an economically rendered history of anti-slavery activism. Here, Jewish Scriptures were the first in the ancient world to set down laws so restrictive of the slave owner as effectively to make slavery as it was known impossible. The owner was obliged to treat the "slave" with many of the considerations you would extend to a guest in your home, being forbidden, for example, to give his slave cheap wine while he himself enjoyed a more expensive variety. If the owner drinks fine wine, so must the slave. But as an advocate of total abolitionism, the Catholic Church was far ahead of everyone. "In the thirteenth century, Saint Thomas Aquinas deduced that slavery was a sin, and a series of popes upheld his position, beginning in 1435 and culminating in three major pronouncements against slavery by Pope Paul III in 1537."

'In the thirteenth century, Saint Thomas Aquinas deduced that slavery was a sin, and a series of popes upheld his position.'

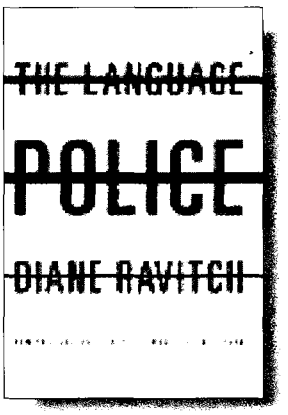
Muslims could muster no such outrage at the practice since Muhammad himself "bought, sold, captured, and owned slaves." So Muslim slavery was perpetuated (and still is not entirely stamped out), though the current, physical evidence of its history is not as apparent as that of slavery in the Americas. Muslims preferred to import African women, not men, and the children of these slaves by their owners were often killed at birth, which is why you don't see many blacks today in Islamic countries.

Believers in other non-Biblical faiths similarly find little support in their traditions for opposing enslavement. In their forms familiar to Western adherents, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism posit no personal deity at all but rather an impersonal universal "essence" underlying the universe but possessing no will, no ability to command human beings in any way about their treatment of others. This "essence" cannot take a view, one way or the other, about slavery.

It's natural to wonder what Stark himself believes. He writes as a sociologist and historian, not a theologian, and is careful to say nothing about his own faith except that he is not a Catholic. The very last sentence in his book is intriguing: "In these ways, at least, Western civilization really was God-given." He means that, for all the basically structural reasons he lays out in *For the Glory of God*, religious faith made our culture what it is, namely the envy of the world. But, read another way, the sentence may convey a truth that Stark chooses not to state unambiguously.

As I was reading this book I thought of a rather cryptic teaching from rabbinic tradition. It's said that when God started to create the universe He first looked in the Torah, like an architect consulting a blueprint. Is this supposed to mean that somewhere in the Pentateuch we should find a little map of North America that the Lord was gazing at when He made the California coastline? No, the point is that Scripture gives its readers the key to understanding how the world works. In that sense it's a blueprint. If you understand the Bible, you understand the world. A corollary is that the civilization that possesses such a key is bound to flourish beyond the advancements of rival cultures. It's no coincidence that Biblical civilization developed as it did. Happily for those other cultures, the key can be duplicated: The fortune enjoyed by Christians and Jews is fully transferable. If Rodney Stark is right, it would follow that introducing the Bible to other peoples is indeed to impart a gift. Whether others are ready to accept the gift is another question. **NR**

Censors Everywhere



The Language Police: How Pressure Groups Restrict What Students Learn, by Diane Ravitch (Knopf, 255 pp., $24)

TRACY LEE SIMMONS

It was one of the most delicious moments in the recent history of academic idiocy when, in 1982, the principal of the Mark Twain Intermediate School in Fairfax County, Virginia, tried to remove *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* from the school's library; a school administrator assaulted the book as "racist trash" for its showcasing of racial stereotypes, as well as for its use of the "N-word."

This kind of academic overreach has become quite common, and has been much commented upon. But Diane Ravitch has unearthed some far more methodical meddling in the academy than these sporadic effusions of the naïve and righteous: She finds that the compilers of today's school textbooks and standardized tests are often less eager to inform and measure than to propagandize and distort—and seek even to alter the very ways we communicate.

When she began work on what became *The Language Police*, she intended nothing more ample than a learned journal

Mr. Simmons, the author of *Climbing Parnassus: A New Apologia for Greek and Latin*, is director of the Dow Journalism Program at Hillsdale College.

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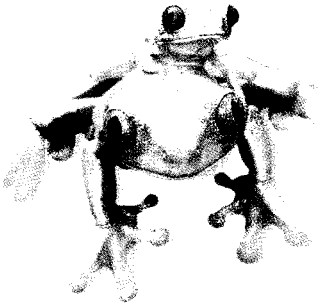


Panama Canal Cruise

Sailing November 8–18 aboard Holland America's MS *Rotterdam* with

RICHARD ALLEN, RALPH REED, NORMAN PODHORETZ, MIDGE DECTER, STEPHEN MOORE, BRENT BOZELL, JONAH GOLDBERG, KATE O'BEIRNE, RICH LOWRY, BYRON YORK, JAY NORDLINGER, and RAMESH PONNURU!

Here's your special opportunity to take part in one of the most exciting seafaring adventures you will ever experience: the ***National Review* 2003 Panama Canal Cruise**. Featuring an incredible cast of conservative celebrity speakers—and extremely affordable accommodations—this special trip will take place November 8–18, 2003, aboard Holland America Line's stunning flagship, the MS *Rotterdam*.

This is a *unique* opportunity to meet America's most preeminent conservative celebrities: "Definites" for this special voyage are former Reagan National Security Advisor **Richard Allen**; renowned conservative social commentators **Norman Podhoretz** and **Midge Decter**; Republican political strategist supreme **Ralph Reed**; Media Research Center chief **Brent Bozell**, the scourge of the Fourth Estate; and the tax-cutting champion founder of the Club for Growth, *NR* Contributing Editor **Stephen Moore**. (We're awaiting RSVPs from other top conservatives who have been invited.)

The *NR* "gang"—Editor **Rich Lowry**, Washington Editor **Kate O'Beirne**, Senior Editor **Ramesh Ponnuru**, Managing Editor **Jay Nordlinger**, White House Correspondent **Byron York**, and National Review Online Editor-at-Large **Jonah Goldberg**—will be along for the ten luxurious days of political shop-talk, conservative revelry, and world-class cruising.

Some 300-plus *NR* readers—make certain you're one of them!—are expected to take this wonderful trip, which will sojourn through the sun-drenched Southern Caribbean, where the *Rotterdam* will be visiting the lovely tropical ports of Aruba and Curacao (and Holland America's beautiful private island, Half Moon Cay), and then head on to the Isthmus's famed modern marvel (we'll pass through the Canal with inches to spare—it's a fascinating experience!), all of which will be followed by a lengthy visit to stunning Costa Rica. It is sure to be a great trip, *and* one of the most affordable *NR* voyages ever. Prices start at an *incredibly* low $2,199 per person (which includes many of those normally "extra" charges)!

For those of you who've *wanted* to go on an *NR* cruise, but *haven't* yet, consider this: Over half of our group are *NR* cruise "alumni." (Indeed, the typical *NR* cruiser has been on an average of three trips!) They keep "coming back" for a reason: Quite simply, *NR* cruises are a great time. It's time you discovered this for yourself.

An *NR* cruise is your unique chance to meet and intimately discuss politics and policy with some of the true giants of conservative affairs. Our exciting seminars—we've scheduled seven panel sessions (they're two hours each)—allow for ample audience "Q & A," and provide a scintillating take on current events.

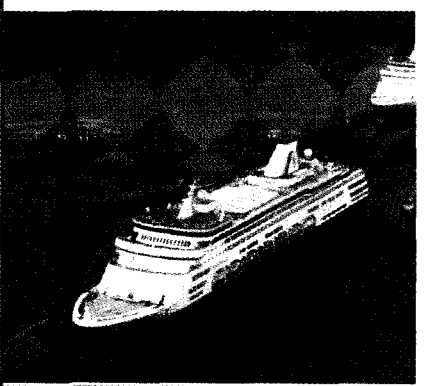
And then there are those exclusive "extras." In addition to the seminars, we have *three* cocktail receptions planned (super-fun affairs featuring great food and libations), *two* late-night poolside "smokers" (with world-class **H. Upmann** cigars—*and* a complimentary cognac!), plus intimate dining with speakers and editors.

TEN FANTASTIC DAYS OF FUN, SUN, AND CONSERVATIVE REVELRY!

DAY/DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART	SPECIAL EVENT
Sat./Nov. 8	Ft. Lauderdale, FL		5:00PM	
Sun./Nov. 9	Half Moon Cay (Bahamas)	8:00AM	4PM	evening cocktail reception
Mon./Nov. 10	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars late-night poolside smoker
Tues./Nov. 11	Willemstad, Curacao	10:00AM	10:00PM	
Wed./Nov. 12	Oranjestad, Aruba	7:00AM	4:30PM	
Thur./Nov. 13	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars evening cocktail reception
Fri./Nov. 14	Panama Canal Gatun Lake	9:00AM	4:00PM	
Sat./Nov. 15	Puerto Limon, Costa Rica	6:00AM	6:00PM	late-night poolside smoker
Sun./Nov. 16	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars
Mon./Nov. 17	AT SEA			morning seminar evening cocktail reception
Tues./Nov. 18	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	8:00AM		

All *that* will come on top of a *great* cruise on a *great* ship. The *Rotterdam* is one of the more beloved vessels of Holland America Line (which readers of *Travel & Leisure* last year voted the world's Highest-Rated Premium Cruise Line!).

On the ***National Review* 2003 Panama Canal Cruise** you'll find the *Rotterdam*'s accommodations (elegant staterooms and glamorous public spaces) to be truly luxurious, and matched by the indulgent, courteous



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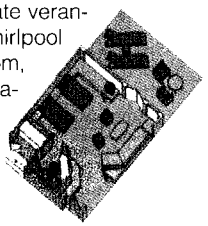
BOOK TODAY! LUXURY STATEROOMS START AT ONLY $2,199 P/P!

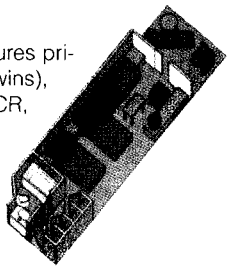
Travel experts agree: Holland America Line offers high-valued premium cruising. Superior service, gourmet cuisine, elegant accommodations, and great entertainment await you on the beautiful *Rotterdam*. Prices are per-person, based on double occupancy, and include port fees, taxes, gratuities, transfers (for those booking airfare through HAL), all meals, entertainment, and admittance to and participation in all *National Review* functions. Rates for third/fourth person in cabin: $1,248 p/p for ages 2 and older, $840 p/p for children younger than 2.

SUITE Luxury quarters (563 sq. ft.) features private verandah, king-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), whirlpool bath/shower, floor-to-ceiling windows, dressing room, large sitting area, sofa bed, VCR, mini-bar, refrigerator, concierge service, complimentary personalized stationery, hors d'oeuvres, dry cleaning, and more, plus special disembarkation privileges.



Category S
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,999 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 6,999

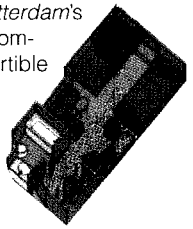
MINI SUITE Large stateroom (284 sq. ft.) features private verandah, king-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), sofa bed, whirlpool bath/shower, sitting area, VCR, mini-bar, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows.



Categories A and B
"A" DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,599 P/P
"A" SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,999

"B" DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,499 P/P
"B" SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,899

LARGE OUTSIDE STATEROOM The *Rotterdam*'s large "Outside Staterooms" (197 sq. ft.) are comfortable and feature a queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), a large picture window, plus bath/shower combination.



Category D
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,699 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,499

LARGE INSIDE STATEROOM The *Rotterdam*'s very accommodating "Inside Staterooms," (182 sq. ft.) offer 2 twin beds that are convertible to one queen-size bed, plus a bath with shower. This is a very affordable category designed to provide you with maximum comfort.

Category K
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,199 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,999

staff, superior cuisine, and top-notch entertainment and excursions. You'll want to join us for the exciting political discussions, the luxurious cruise experience, and the rest and relaxation you so richly deserve. *And* for the great destinations. The ***National Review* 2003 Panama Canal Cruise** will feature a balmy itinerary, starting in Ft. Lauderdale. Here are some port highlights:

HALF MOON CAY: A delightful spot with white beaches and a sparkling blue lagoon. Go on: Relax on a hammock while you sip a delightful concoction—*after* a sumptuous barbeque feast!

CURACAO: Willemstad is warm and inviting, a Dutch enclave known for its rows of charming pastel-colored houses and its famed Floating Market. Scuba and snorkeling enthusiasts will revel in the renowned Underwater Marine Park.

ARUBA: The *Rotterdam* will spend a pleasant day in Oranjestad—explore Nassaustraat, brimming with quaint shops. Water sports abound: snorkeling, rides on glass bottom boats and submarines. Or venture into the countryside to see the haunts of the huge green parakeet, the unique rock gardens of Casi Bari, the curious divi divi tree, forever bending in the tradewind breezes.

GATUN LAKE: After traveling through the Eighth Wonder of the World, the *Rotterdam* will stop at this huge, man-made lake. Numerous excursions (a visit to Panama City, or a tour of the real "inner workings" of the Canal system) await you.

COSTA RICA: A full twelve-hour stop at Puerto Limon affords you the special opportunity to tour rainforests, tropical flower farms, or even to ride a Mawamba boat through the jungle canals. The more adventurous can white-water raft down spectacular rivers, or stroll through the markets bursting with color in San Jose.

Sign up today and join the hundred-plus *NR* readers who have already reserved a spot on what will surely be ten of the most fun-filled days any conservative could ever experience. Just fill out the application form on the following page, and return it (by mail or fax) so you can secure your stateroom. There's one to fit everyone's taste and budget (FYI: "Suites" are limited and *very* popular—they're available on a first come, first served basis, and just a few remain!). You'll also find pricing on Holland America's affordable "Fly Cruise" airfare program.

Take part in a truly special conservative event. Join us this November on the *Rotterdam*, in the company of **Richard Allen, Norman Podhoretz, Midge Decter, Ralph Reed, Brent Bozell, Stephen Moore, Rich Lowry, Kate O'Beirne, Ramesh Ponnuru, Jay Nordlinger, Byron York**, and **Jonah Goldberg**, on the ***National Review* 2003 Panama Canal Cruise.**

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The National Review 2003 Panama Canal Cruise Application

Mail to: National Review Cruise, The Cruise Authority, 1307 Powers Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30067-5409 or Fax to 770-916-1425

Please fill out application completely and mail with deposit check or fax with credit-card information. One application per cabin. If you want more than one cabin, make copies of this application. For questions call The Cruise Authority at 800-707-1634.

Personal

Shirt size (M/L/XL) _____

Name #1 (full legal name) + Nickname

Shirt size (M/L/XL) _____

Name #2 (full legal name) + Nickname

Names #3 & #4 (if taking others in your cabin)

Street Mailing Address

( )

City State ZIP

Daytime Phone

Special Information (medical conditions, celebrating anniversary, etc.)

Payment

A deposit of $1,200 per cabin is due with this application. If paid by credit card, balance will be charged to *same* card on 8/8/03 unless otherwise directed. If application is received after 8/8/03, the full amount of cruise will be charged. Cabins and categories are available on a first come, first served basis. *Suites are limited!*

☐ My deposit of $1,200 per stateroom is included.
(Make checks payable to "National Review Cruise")

☐ Charge to: AmEx ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Expiration Date (Month) ☐☐ (Year) ☐☐

Authorized Signature of Cardholder/Guest

Information and price quote on Cancellation Fee Waiver/Medical Insurance will accompany your statement. Cancellation Penalty Schedule follows (cancellations must be received in writing by the date indicated):

PRIOR *to June 9, 2003*	*$75 per person*	
June 9, 2003 to Augus 8, 2003	*$600 per person*	
AFTER *August 8, 2003*	*100% of cruise/package*	04/08/NR

Cruise

(All rates are per person, double occupancy, and include all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and *National Review* activities. Cruise-only rates include all of above except airfare and transfers. Failure to appear for embarkation for any reason constitutes a cancellation subject to full penalties. Personal items not included.)

PLEASE CHECK ALL APPLICABLE BOXES!

I. CABIN CATEGORY *(see list and prices on previous page)*

First cabin category choice:_____ Second cabin category choice:_____

Bedding: Beds made up as ☐ Twin ☐ King/Queen

BOOKING SINGLE? ☐ Please try to match me with a roommate. (My age: ____)

II. AIR/TRANSFER PACKAGES

☐ We will provide our own roundtrip air and transfers to and from Ft. Lauderdale.
☐ Include air with our package from _____ (see list below).
☐ We need to purchase transfers from the airport to the ship at $24 per person.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

CITIZENSHIP: Is everyone a U.S. citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If No, indicate citizenship: _____
DINING: I wish to dine with _____

DINNER: ☐ 8:15PM ☐ 6:15PM (conflicts with dining with speakers/events)

IV. PRE- AND POST-CRUISE TOUR PACKAGES

☐ Please send me information on pre-/post-cruise packages in South Florida.

Important!

Everyone cruising will be required to bring either a valid passport OR a certified birth certificate (with raised seal!), plus photo ID. Failure to do so may result in being denied boarding of the *Rotterdam*. Children do not require photo ID.

Responsibility: Notice is hereby given that the cruise advertised herein, including all tickets, vouchers and coupons issued and all arrangements for transportation or conveyance or for hotel or lodging or for sightseeing services are made by H20 Ltd. d/b/a The Cruise Authority (TCA) on behalf of National Review, as agency for Holland America Line (HAL), and/or service providers and/or suppliers providing services necessary for operation of the tour upon the express condition that TCA shall not be liable for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity to any tour participant or his or her property that may result from any act or omission of any company, contractor or employee thereof providing services in connection with the tour, including but not limited to transportation, lodging, food and beverage, entertainment, sightseeing, luggage handling and tour guiding. Furthermore, TCA cannot be held responsible for delays or costs incurred resulting from weather and road connections, breakdowns, strikes, riots, acts of God, authority of law or other circumstances beyond its control. In the event that a participant be entitled to a refund of monies paid, TCA will not be liable in excess of amount paid. TCA reserves the right to decline any persons as a tour participant at any time. TCA is not responsible for price increases imposed by HAL and/or service providers. Such increases may be implemented prior to deposit received. TCA is not responsible for breach of contract or any intentional or careless actions or omissions on the part of HAL and/or service providers, such as suppliers of tours or other services used or obtained on or at the time of the cruise or shore excursions, which result in any loss, damage, delay or injury to you or your travel companions or group members. TCA does not guarantee any of such suppliers rates, booking or reservations and TCA shall not be responsible for any social or labor unrest, mechanical or construction difficulties, diseases, local laws, climate conditions, abnormal conditions or developments or any other actions, omissions or conditions outside of TCA's control. TCA, nor National Review shall be responsible for the accessibility, appearance, actions or decisions of those individuals promoted for this cruise. By embarking upon his or her travel, the traveler voluntarily assumes all risks, and is advised to obtain appropriate insurance coverage against them. Retention of tickets, reservations, or package after issuance shall constitute a consent to the above and an agreement on your part to convey the contents hereof to your travel companions.

AIR TRAVEL: Holland America's "Fly Cruise" Program, which offers convenient round-trip, economy-class air transportation (First Class air is available on request; you cannot use frequent flyer points to upgrade these airfares to First Class)—and all baggage and transfers—from the following cities:

AL	Birmingham	479
	Huntsville	459
	Mobile	459
AK	Anchorage	899
AR	Little Rock	459
AZ	Phoenix	609
	Tucson	649
CA	Fresno	639
	Los Angeles	639
	Oakland	679
	Ontario	709
	Sacramento	659
	San Diego	659
	San Francisco	639
	San Jose	659
CO	Col. Springs	659
	Denver	6029
CT	Hartford	449
DC	Washington	449
FL	Jacksonville	349
	Orlando	209
FL	Pensacola	419
	Tampa	219
GA	Augusta	409
	Atlanta	399
	Savannah	409
HI	Honolulu	1,089
ID	Boise	779
IL	Chicago	519
IN	Ft. Wayne	569
	Indianapolis	479
IA	Cedar Rapids	549
	Des Moines	539
KS	Wichita	619
KY	Lexington	459
	Louisville	469
LA	Baton Rouge	459
	New Orleans	439
	Shreveport	459
ME	Bangor	519
	Portland	499
MD	Baltimore	459
MA	Boston	449
MI	Detroit	479
	Grand Rapids	569
	Lansing	569
	Saginaw	619
MN	Mnpls/St. Paul	549
	Rochester	609
MS	Jackson	479
MO	Kansas City	539
MO	Springfield	589
	St. Louis	529
MT	Billings	759
NE	Lincoln	569
	Omaha	569
NV	Las Vegas	649
	Reno	649
NH	Manchester	459
NJ	Newark	439
NM	Albuquerque	639
NY	Albany	499
	Binghamton	519
NY	Buffalo	449
	NYC (LGA/JFK)	439
	Rochester	449
	Syracuse	449
NC	Charlotte	409
	Greensboro	409
	Raleigh/Durham	449
OK	Oklahoma City	529
	Tulsa	529
OH	Akron	479
	Cincinnati	459
	Cleveland	459
	Columbus	469
	Dayton	469
OR	Eugene	779
	Medford	779
	Portland	649
PA	Allentown	499
	Erie	519
	Harrisburg	449
	Philadelphia	449
PA	Pittsburgh	449
	Wilkes-Barre	459
RI	Providence	519
SC	Charleston	419
	Columbia	419
	Greenville	419
SD	Sioux Falls	669
TX	Amarillo	609
	Austin	539
	Corpus Christi	609
	Dallas/Ft. Worth	519
	El Paso	639
	Houston (IAH)	479
	Lubbock	609
	McAllen	519
	Midland/Odessa	659
	San Antonio	519
TN	Chattanooga	479
	Knoxville	469
	Memphis	469
	Nashville	459
TN	TriCities	529
UT	Salt Lake City	699
VA	Norfolk	449
	Richmond	449
	Roanoke	449
WA	Seattle	649
	Spokane	719
WI	Madison	569
	Milwaukee	519

CANADA ($USD)

Calgary	589
Edmonton	589
Montreal	669
Ottawa	679
Quebec	719
Toronto	659
Vancouver	439
Victoria	559
Winnipeg	619

FLORIDA MOTORCOACH TRAVEL

Enjoy roundtrip motorcoach from the following Florida cities for only $45 per person:

Boca Raton	Bradenton
Clearwater	Daytona Bch.
Ft. Myers	Ft. Pierce
Jacksonville	Lakeland
Leesburg	Melbourne
Naples	Ocala
Orlando	Palm Coast
Palm Harbor	Port Charlotte
Sarasota	Sebastian
Sebring	Spring Hill
St. Augustine	St. Petersburg
Stuart	Sun City
Tampa	Tarpon Springs
Venice	Vero Beach
W. Palm Beach	Winterhaven

IMPORTANT NOTES: 1. These air add-ons apply to the cruise or cruise + pre- or post-cruise package. All transfers for air/sea passengers in Ft. Lauderdale are included. 2. Should you elect to provide your own air transportation, note that transfers from the airport to the Rotterdam (Port Everglades) are **not** included; however, the distance from airport to cruise ship is very close (approx. 5 minutes by cab). You must arrive in San Diego no later than 1:00pm on November 8th. Your return flight from Ft. Lauderdale should not be arranged before 11:00am on November 18th. 3. Should you wish to deviate your air from the "standard" schedule, Holland America Line charges $50pp for this service. All requests must be sent in writing to The Cruise Authority. Air deviation fees are non-refundable. 4. Any special seat assignments or other requests must be made directly with the participating air carrier. You will receive your air schedule approximately 30 days prior to departure date. 5. Round-trip transfers are available for purchase from the Ft. Lauderdale airport (Nov. 8 and 18 only) for $24 per person, and must be arranged for in advance via The Cruise Authority. We will require your flight itinerary to confirm these.

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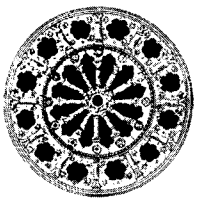
article of the kind that she, as a distinguished historian of education at New York University and senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, is eminently fit to write. But the banquet of nonsense served up by textbook publishers, and those who advise them, proved too bountiful for mere snacking. With the relentless accuracy of a detective, she has traced the insidious ways in which politically correct assumptions have become endemic and all but irresistible, and in doing so she has traced a major source of rot in the schools and our culture. This book should sound alarms to all who have anything to do with teaching children, as it reveals just how deeply—and systematically—non-thought has seeped into the American mind.

Ravitch's welcome brand of scholarly common sense comes to us well recommended. Having served as an assistant secretary in the Department of Education under the first President Bush, she was also nominated by President Clinton to the National Assessment Governing Board, which is charged with guiding national testing—and it is this appointment, and the professional encounters it brought, that led to this book. Hers is a trustworthy, non-partisan voice. All the better, then, that someone of her stature has come forward with such a study.

This book describes more or less official, or officially sponsored, censorship, mainly in the contentious fields of literature and history. We're well familiar with the typical methods the official classes use to enforce their jackbooted version of reality, and Ravitch doesn't shortchange them. Throughout both textbooks and tests, students of all ages are to be protected from anything offensive, unseemly, or even real. This is not always the worst possible impulse; younger children especially may need graduated exposure to unpleasant things. But insuperable problems can arise when bureaucrats—committee drones least qualified to make subtler judgments—change the words, and then the very nature, of their material. To protect themselves from controversy and low adoption rates by school districts, textbook and test publishers now routinely hire "sensitivity reviewers"—a nicely Orwellian name for gatekeepers, who censor offensive material. Unfortunately, though, "offensive" is becoming an umbrella word with astonishingly wide coverage. Ravitch supplies us with an exhaustive list of both old and new prohibitions.

She wisely distinguishes between the wills to censor: Those of the Right are different from those of the Left. The worries of the Right are usually moral. These may be sound in themselves (and "selection is not censorship," she rightly reminds us), but highly charged moral concerns, when abused, can cause good and great literature to become a pawn in the hands of the shallow and unreflective. The censorship of the Left, though, is far worse, mostly because it springs from more broadly political and multicultural fantasies.



It's one thing to object to crass violence or explicit sexuality; what should surprise, and even shock, us laymen are the new categories being established of forbidden words and images. Some of these are garden variety: We must seek "fairness" and "diversity" in all things. We must make no arbitrary or disparaging distinctions of sex, such as *actress*, *coed*, *dame*. (*Aviatrix* is a real loss.) Whenever possible, *Adam and Eve* should be reversed to *Eve and Adam* so as to give priority to the female. Textbooks must also avoid the use of any feminine pronoun when referring to countries, boats, and ships. (Indeed we are to spare no pains in cauterizing the poetry from our language.) *Bookworm* and *egghead* are now considered demeaning: we're to replace both with *intellectual*, which really is demeaning. *Dogma* is to be banned as "ethnocentric" in favor of *doctrine* or *belief*. (*Fanatic* is also "ethnocentric," as is nearly every other historically useful word.) Even *God* is banned as potentially upsetting.

Then the batter thickens. Children shouldn't read stories or see pictures of a mother cooking for her children or a black family living in a city neighborhood because of the gender and racial stereotypes implied. They shouldn't read stories including angry, loud, or truculent characters because these are not "uplifting." They're not to read tales set in forests, jungles, mountains, or by the sea because these settings are supposed to betray a "regional bias." Even the poor dinosaurs are out because they carry somehow the freight of evolution. Prospective school anthologies that would contain any of these elements must have them expurgated—or the whole project gets scrapped. It would be an instructive exercise for all reading adults to check off the books and stories they fancied as children and adolescents—and perhaps rediscovered later—and determine how many would be left standing after the hypersensitive twits have done their destructive work. My *Treasure Island* would certainly be confiscated, along with pretty much everything else. One almost wonders if there could be a hidden agenda here to empty our shelves.

Suspicions of confiscation, in fact, don't come amiss in a book in which Ray Bradbury is cited. His warning from the Coda of *Fahrenheit 451* could do for some serious reconsideration: "For it is a mad world and it will get madder if we allow the minorities, be they dwarf or giant, orangutan or dolphin, nuclear-head or water-conversationalist, pro-computerologist or Neo-Luddite, simpleton or sage, to interfere with aesthetics." Or perhaps the proper and reasonable fear is a confiscation from the young, well down the road, of a taste for that which is not exclusively political, for that which opens before us wider and higher vistas. But the politically obsessed can never be expected to understand this. They live in mental caves.

What Ravitch's book shows most clearly are the mild degrees by which stupidity can become a basis for public policy. The object of all this ceaseless fidgeting with language is an inevitable softening of reality, which tends to become, in the end, a falsification of reality. The intentions of the textbook publishers themselves may not be sinister—in fact they wish only to sell their products—but the cultural results of their actions over time could be dire. The outcome is in fact a bland, homogenous ignorance in those young people who lack the benefits of self-motivating curiosity or the good fortune to come from intellectually ambitious households. The putative guardians of language are not only politically dangerous; their work is culturally enervating. "So long as books and stories continue to be strained through a sieve of political correctness," Ravitch writes, "fashioned by partisans of both left and right, all that is left for students to read will be thin gruel." And no one will be the winner. **NR**

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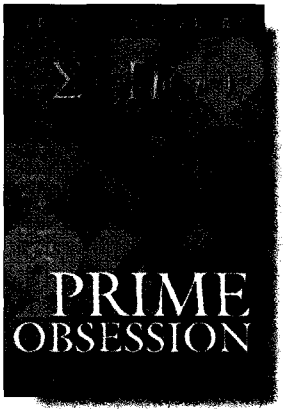
One Man's Zeta Jones



Prime Obsession: Bernhard Riemann and the Greatest Unsolved Problem in Mathematics, by John Derbyshire (Joseph Henry, 304 pp., $27.95)

DAVID GELERNTER

THIS is a striking and brilliant book, in many ways the most ambitious science-for-the-public attempt I have ever read. John Derbyshire undertakes a task which is (we are more or less convinced by the end) impossible, and yet the book succeeds, and at its best it is beautiful. It reads as if it were written not merely by a mathematics scholar but by a first-rate novelist—and that is what Derbyshire is.

An unmathematical reader might have difficulty in following it all but not in reading it. If you can't stretch your concentration far and wide enough to cover the whole thing, there are nonetheless so many provoking and illuminating observations along the way that you will be scooped up and carried along whether or not you ever come to terms with the big picture.

Derbyshire sets out to explain "the greatest unsolved problem in mathematics," the Riemann hypothesis. It is Derbyshire's bad luck that, over the last generation, two other problems that used to head up the Greatest Unsolved chart have been disposed of. Those two—the Four Color Theorem and the ever-popular Fermat's Last—each had the winsome appeal of a small cuddly animal. Four colors are sufficient (says the Four Color Theorem) to let you tint any ordinary black-and-white map in such a way that no two adjacent countries or regions have the same color. Sounds simple and is. Anyone can heft it and (for that matter) cuddle it: Nearly every math or science student figured he could discover a proof, and killed an enjoyable few days trying. Such unsolved problems were no mere spectator sports. Everyone could play.

But today, it is Riemann's turn atop the list. Derbyshire shows us that the Riemann hypothesis is a broad, deep, and fascinating topic—but the hypothesis states (I regret to inform the reader) that "All non-trivial zeros of the zeta function have real part one-half." Which might possibly not strike you as the sexiest proposition you ever saw.

It takes a fair amount of mathematics even to say what the zeta function is, let alone why anyone should care. But Derbyshire sets out to explain the hypothesis, how it relates to a deep and fascinating fact about prime numbers, and how it connects to many other far-flung parts of mathematics and physics. Prime numbers are the heart of the story, and they (if not the hypothesis itself) are easily grasped. As you count upwards from 1, prime numbers—which are divisible only by themselves and 1 (2, 3, 5, 7, 11, and so on)—keep showing up, but less and less often. They grow ever scarcer, yet never peter out entirely. Between 1 and 100 there are 25, between 901 and 1,000 only 14; in the last 100-count before one trillion, a mere 4.

In 1859 the great mathematician Bernhard Riemann published a paper about the Prime Number Theorem—which quantifies the Petering-Out of the Primes—and in the process invented "a mathematical object of great power and subtlety" . . . and then threw out a "casual, incidental guess" about this fine new object he had invented. The new object was the zeta function, and his guess came to be known as the Riemann hypothesis—which has since become "an obsession" among mathematicians, says Derbyshire, "having resisted every attempt at proof or disproof. Indeed, the obsession is now stronger than ever."

The hypothesis makes a rich and fascinating topic because it encapsulates so much and such varied mathematics, and has such wide-ranging implications. It is a mathematical opal winking and shimmer-

Mr. Gelernter, a professor of computer science at Yale, is a contributing editor of *The Weekly Standard*.

SUMMER STORM

We stood on the rented patio
While the party went on inside.
You knew the groom from college.
I was a friend of the bride.

We hugged the brownstone wall
  behind us
To keep our dress clothes dry
And watched the sudden summer storm
Floodlit against the sky.

The rain was like a waterfall
Of brilliant beaded light,
Cool and silent as the stars
The storm hid from the night.

To my surprise, you took my arm—
A gesture you didn't explain—
And we spoke in whispers, as if we two
Might imitate the rain.

Then suddenly the storm receded
As swiftly as it came.
The doors behind us opened up.
The hostess called your name.

I watched you merge into the group,
Aloof and yet polite.
We didn't speak another word
Except to say goodnight.

Why does that evening's memory
Return with this night's storm—
A party twenty years ago,
Its disappointments warm?

There are so many *might have beens*,
What ifs that won't stay buried,
Other cities, other jobs,
Strangers we might have married.

And memory insists on pining
For places it never went,
As if life would be happier
Just by being different.

—DANA GIOIA

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ing with a million colors; contemplate this one gem long and carefully enough and you will see whole worlds without moving from the spot. But (of course) this richness is exactly what makes the topic a potential killer to write about, especially (but not only) if your book is for laymen.

To explain the hypothesis, Derbyshire force-marches his readers through the fields of functions and limits and infinite series and natural logarithms, and across the complex plane; he allows us a refreshing quick dip into calculus and then (onward!) to "a little algebra" (but not too little), chaos theory, "the *vis viva* equation familiar to all students of elementary celestial mechanics," and beyond.

"A Little Algebra" is a chapter that shows the method's successes and failures. Derbyshire's discussion of field theory (algebra over specially restricted sets of numbers or quasi-numbers) is quick but clear, bracing, and fairly easy to follow. The author then spots himself eight pages for "operators" (which have to do with matrices, etc.)—and leaves a broken heap of dying half-explanations behind him as he marches inexorably forward. Apologies to the "mathematically fastidious," instructions to go look it up "in any decent algebra textbook," "suffice it to say that they exist," "I'm afraid I can't explain just how you find . . ."—these statements all crop up within a single two-page stretch. They are symptoms of an author's having tried manfully to run up a down escalator and failed.

But of course he faces the same difficulties all authors do when they try to bring science to the unmathed masses: They leave the problem-solving, examples, and details out, so they can focus on the big ideas. Fair enough. But those edited-out details don't merely make textbooks boring and indigestible. They slow them down too, to a human (or at least humanoid) pace. One single ripe Derbyshire *paragraph* introduces the modulus and amplitude of complex numbers, the idea of measuring angles in radians, some handy facts about degrees in a radian, and the amplitudes of positive and negative real and imaginary numbers—together with, naturally, the standard notations for modulus and amplitude, and the formula for a complex number's amplitude as derived from Pythagoras. Which should all be easy to follow, so long as you already know it.

And yet the book is compelling. Compelling!—because Derbyshire writes with a novelist's eye and ear, and a novelist's feel for the concrete image, the telling detail, the come-hither sentence. "Once again, log x looks as though it is trying to pass itself off as x^{0}"—Derbyshire makes every part of this thought clear and fascinating; in fact it is a major sub-plot of his book. Looking at a chart or table with powers of x displayed in some context or other, repeatedly you find the x-to-the-zero entry missing in action—and replaced by log x. The implications are remarkable and profound.

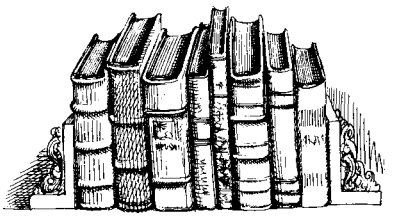
Imaginary numbers "are no more imaginary than any other kind of number," the author briskly explains; "when was the last time you stubbed your toe on a seven?" He seeks to recount "the great fusion between arithmetic and analysis—between counting and measuring, between numbers *staccato* and numbers *legato*." He describes the graph of log x: At first "the ascent is very steep, and you need rock-climbing gear," but eventually "you can get upright and actually walk it." Such crisp, clear, sparkling-as-a-mountain-brook sentences make plain why math books should be written only by distinguished novelists. Perhaps we could enact a law to that effect. (Or the Supreme Court could discover one.)

And so far I have described only half the book. *Prime Obsession* amounts to a math book and a cultural history intertwined, math chapters alternating with history. The history chapters deal with Bernhard Riemann (the hero), Leonhard Euler (the sub-hero), many other mathematicians, the monarchs of the states in which they lived, the appealing straightforwardness of Euler's Latin prose (brief sample and commentary included), the serious Protestant faith of Euler and Riemann, the fact that three of five Goettingen mathematics professors were Jews at the time the Nazis took over and destroyed German intellectual life (evidently forever), but of those three only Edmund Landau belonged to the local synagogue; et cetera.

Prime Obsession is, in short, a learned man's labor of love. And the learned man is a brilliant writer into the deal. Such books don't crop up every day. It must have been a daunting project to think about, and killingly hard to do. It is our good luck that he did it anyway. **NR**

■ SHELF LIFE ■

Question Authority



MICHAEL POTEMRA

THREE years ago, Encounter Books set out on a crucial mission: Publisher Peter Collier wanted to "enlarge the space for ideas in our culture" by publishing serious conservative nonfiction. And Encounter has more than fulfilled its early promise—it is, today, one of the most reliable sources of excellent works on politics and culture. Every conservative reader will have his own favorites. Among mine are *The Abolition of Britain*, Peter Hitchens's devastating account of social and cultural collapse in the U.K.; *The War over Iraq*, a compelling and timely indictment of Saddam Hussein's regime by Lawrence F. Kaplan and William Kristol; and *Heaven on Earth*, Joshua Muravchik's magisterial history of the failure of socialism.

That Encounter is thriving is great news, because it is a countercultural enterprise of an especially helpful kind. Today's cultural orthodoxies are not the same ones Peter Collier rebelled against back when he was a Sixties radical, but they are just as deeply entrenched. One of the most harmful is the *idée fixe*—by now, more accurately, a *folie à millions*—that the way to improve our children's education is to spend more money on the demands of the teachers unions. One of the best new books Encounter is publishing this year will help convince America to renounce this illusion. In *Breaking Free: Public School Lessons and the Imperative of School Choice* (248 pp., $25.95), Sol Stern describes his experiences as a parent of children in the New York City public schools, and outlines what the money-obsessed unions have done to education.

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> Between 1965 and 1990, average per-pupil spending in the United States increased from $2,402 to $5,582 in inflation-adjusted dollars. . . . Why did American public education go into the tank just as all that extra money was pouring in? To put it simply: Adding powerful unions with exclusive collective bargaining rights to the existing monopolistic education system has been a lethal mix. In the private sector, unions know that if they insist on protecting incompetent workers and cling to outdated work rules, the company they are bargaining with is likely to end up losing market share. Union members will then lose jobs.

In public education, of course, this doesn't happen. Stern's case is airtight, but it's the anecdotes that make his book such a delight to read. Once you meet the characters in his pages—the teacher who sleeps in class, the custodian who refuses to clean, and the numerous unspeakable bureaucrats—you will be convinced of the need for reform, but you'll also probably have a smile on your face. What comes through most clearly is Stern's old-fashioned American idealism. He, too, was a Sixties radical, and sees the continuity between his enthusiasms past and present. In his discussion of school choice, for example, he calls for "one, two, three, many Milwaukees":

> If the reader recognizes this locution from the 1960s (when Che Guevara called for "two, three, many Vietnams"), it wasn't included here by accident. Increasingly I have been struck by the similarities between the contemporary school-choice movement and the protest movements I was part of many years ago. . . . It's the teachers' unions that have become the ruling class in education. . . . Today's school-choice activists are challenging the coercive and bureaucratic culture of public education, just as we in the student protest movements of the Sixties took on what we regarded as the authoritarian, top-down, factory-model universities.

Stern is standing up to The Man, and good for him. Everybody who cares about public education should read *Breaking Free*; others should read it simply because it's a great book. It's part of the solution—exactly the kind of book Encounter specializes in. **NR**

■ MUSIC ■

Backhaus for Your House

JAY NORDLINGER

Daniel Barenboim just completed a cycle of Beethoven piano sonatas at Carnegie Hall. That is, he played all 32 sonatas, over eight recitals. In so doing, he became only the fourth pianist to perform this cycle in that historic hall. The first was Artur Schnabel, in 1936. Then came Alfred Brendel, almost 50 years later. Then Maurizio Pollini. And now, Barenboim.

The Beethoven sonatas may be considered the summit of the piano literature. They are almost written on tablets. Of course, another summit is Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* (if we can speak for the keyboard in general, rather than the piano in particular). It's pleasant to reflect that Beethoven imbibed *The Well-Tempered Clavier*—both books—while learning in Bonn. Bach soaked into his brain, serving him well, forever.

I have written about Barenboim extensively (elsewhere), and don't intend to repeat myself now: but I will not resist a comment or two. He is a mighty musician, of course, now better known as a conductor than as a pianist. But he is not always a successful pianist. As he proved in those eight recitals, he is shockingly inconsistent, capable of superb playing in one sonata, and outright amateurish—disgraceful—playing in another sonata. He often bulls his way through, not caring what he wrecks. And, at this stage of his career, he may suffer from a lack of practice time.

And yet he thinks he has a lot to say about Beethoven, and we should not contradict him. He has recorded the complete sonatas three times, and he has played the cycle of sonatas many times, all over the world. Listening to him in Carnegie Hall, one thought a lot, naturally, about Beethoven, and about Beethoven pianists, past and present. I happen to like pianists in Beethoven who are not necessarily known as Beethoven pianists. Artur Rubinstein, for example, was extremely good in Beethoven, no matter his reputation as a Romantic.

I cherish an anecdote told about Malcolm Frager, a fine all-purpose pianist. Apparently, he turned to one orchestra, before rehearsing a Beethoven concerto, and said, "As I'm not a Beethoven specialist, I think we should take this at the proper tempos." There is a store of wisdom in that crack.

The market offers many boxed sets of complete Beethoven sonatas. You can get the historic—Schnabel (always), Wilhelm Kempff, Annie Fischer; you can get the contemporary—Richard Goode, John O'Conor, Ian Hobson. But, in recent weeks, my mind has gravitated to Wilhelm Backhaus, the great pianist who lived from 1884 to 1969—and who performed continually for all but the very first of those years. You might say that, in listening to Barenboim batter Beethoven, I was driven to Backhaus, seeking relief.

He is—was—a German pianist, commonly grouped with Kempff and Edwin Fischer. These are thought to be avatars of intellectual, contained, almost professorial pianism. But Backhaus was much broader than merely the Germanic pianist (as were the others), and he was capable of anything. A Germanic grounding, however, never hurts anyone.

A brief biographical rundown, before getting to some recordings: Backhaus was born in Leipzig, when Brahms was still going strong—hell, when Liszt was still alive. He studied with Alois Reckendorf at the local conservatory, and then with Eugen d'Albert, the titanic Liszt student. In 1905, he won the Anton Rubinstein Competition, in which Béla Bartók finished second—an outcome with which the great Hungarian was none too pleased. Backhaus would devote his entire life to piano playing, appearing to some as a kind of musical priest, having little "life" outside of his instrument, but taking his craft and his calling with the utmost seriousness. (This is not to say that

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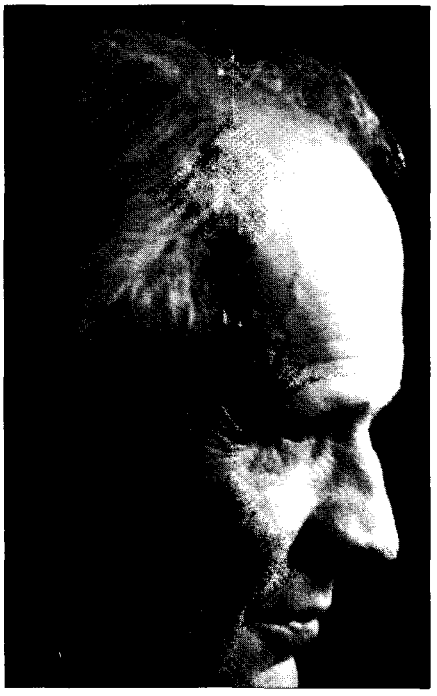
music doesn't have its fun, which Backhaus well knew.)

He loved recordings, and the idea of recording, and took to it early. He was in the studio as early as 1908, when singers like Caruso had barely gotten their arias out. (Singers went before all others, being best suited to the acoustical horn.) Backhaus was the first pianist to record many works: the Chopin études; the Brahms D-minor concerto; the Grieg concerto. Sage though he was, he had an almost superhuman technique. He was, in fact, a virtuoso, although this did not dominate his art. He liked to say that he kept in shape with scales, arpeggios, and Bach—the basics. He thought the public deserved a trim technique, in addition to musical revelation.

Backhaus was associated with what was called "die neue Sachlichkeit" ("the new objectivity"). He was faithful to the score, trying to serve the composer as best he could, while not denying himself altogether. Walter Frei, in a 1992 essay, referred to his "beautiful unobtrusiveness"—a beautifully apt phrase. Vladimir Horowitz paid him a kind of compliment when he said that Backhaus was "a wonderful pianist, not really representative of the German style [ahem]. He was far more relaxed than most of them." He was almost an ideal combination of head and heart, erudition and instinct, obedience and freedom. It seems clearer every year that he was a surpassing musician.

He recorded the complete Beethoven sonatas twice. The second cycle came when he was in his 80s, because his label—Decca—wanted him to lay down the sonatas in stereo: Everything that had been recorded before had to be re-recorded, using this marvelous new method. So these Decca discs (which are easily available) show Backhaus in his autumnal years. His powers are still formidable, even if some—just some—of his fire has dimmed. What you get from Backhaus, above all, is honesty: honesty of expression. Backhaus lets you hear through "interpretation" to the essence of the music itself.

Given that he was more than a Beethoven pianist, I should mention a CD from Pearl, belonging to its Piano Masters series. This features Backhaus in a variety of music, recorded in the 1920s and '30s. He plays two pairs of preludes and fugues from Book 1 of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, including the very first, in C major. What music could be simpler, humbler, purer, greater? Backhaus merely allows it to be. His playing is mature, understanding, and balanced—one might even call it "well tempered." He also plays Liszt's transcription of the Schumann song "Widmung," as was once popular. In his hands, it is sweet and sincere, with no melodrama. And a *Moment musical* (Schubert) is especially touching: a souvenir from a long-ago era.



Wilhelm Backhaus

The Naxos label—very cheap—offers an all-Brahms disc, which includes Backhaus's traversal of the *Variations on a Theme by Paganini*. This is one of the most difficult works in the repertory, but Backhaus evinces no strain—he was as adept as any Russian barnstormer. But the primary miracle of this performance is musical, not technical. He reveals the *Variations* as Brahms himself might have, if he had had the fingers for it. (I myself have my doubts!) The Naxos disc also provides that first recording of the D-minor concerto, with Adrian Boult—a magnificent Brahmsian in his own right—conducting. Together, Backhaus and Boult are impassioned, controlled, and enthralling.

A very nice compilation comes from Andante—a set of four CDs purveying early recordings, including those initial efforts in 1908. It takes a while to get used to the hiss—these cuts date from the Theodore Roosevelt administration, remember—but Backhaus easily wins out. His Chopin études are both stylish and startlingly accurate—and we should bear in mind that Backhaus benefited from no touching up, as later, lazier, less capable pianists would. Some morceaux of the age include a Smetana polka (not terribly Germanic, believe me) and Moszkowski's *Caprice espagnole* (likewise). There are Beethoven concertos, too—the Fourth and the Fifth—and they are noble, feeling, and right.

Perhaps the best taste of Backhaus, however, comes on his *Great Pianists of the 20th Century* discs. I refer to his two-CD installment in the mammoth series issued by Philips five years ago. We hear Backhaus in five Beethoven sonatas, performed in 1954, when he was, arguably, at his very best; we hear him—almost incomparably—in the Brahms Second Concerto; and we hear him in a group of small pieces he would use as encores.

There is a Schubert impromptu, and Schumann's "Warum?"—so gentle and inquiring—and a Chopin étude, and Brahms's C-major intermezzo (a reliable encore of the Austro-German pianist for generations). But the piece I would like to single out is "Soirées de Vienne," which is "Liszt after Schubert," as we say. In music, some things need to be heard, as they are indescribable in words (which is why we have music, apart from speech). All I can tell you—or allege—is that, when Backhaus plays this piece, he conjures up a former, and better, world: Central Europe before 1914, before 1933, before 1939, when all seemed sane and good and lovely. The longing and nostalgia in that playing is almost unbearable. It is hard to stop listening to.

There are plenty of pianists who can play today. (Well, not "plenty.") As I frequently say, there is no need to retreat to recordings. Past-worshiping is to be avoided. But the likes of Wilhelm Backhaus are thin on the ground, and he has much to teach us, through the documents he took care to leave. **NR**

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■ CITY DESK ■

All the World's a . . .

RICHARD BROOKHISER

(A small theater on W. 42nd Street, in NEW YORK CITY. Time: early evening, early summer, early 21st century. The theaters of Broadway, given over to spectacle-hungry suburbanites and gay aficionados of musicals, are several blocks, and quantum levels of success, away. We are in the shadow of the Port Authority bus terminal, among the small venues sustained by public subsidy and cheap production values, where dreams and talents are tried out: Broadway's back offices, television's sweatshops, the Bangalore outsourcing of Hollywood. Tonight's performance is a reading of a new play.

THE STAGE has all the accoutrements of the theater of beggary. It is a small, obviously subdivided space, whose ceiling, walls, and floor are all painted a dead black. Seven or eight black metal spots hang from the ceiling, providing the light. A few large black boxes, either for storage or to suggest furniture, sit stacked and ignored in a corner; they will not be touched. An air-conditioner is set in the back wall; it rumbles like a crop-duster, and so must be turned off as soon as the action begins. Other outside sounds come through quite clearly however: stomping feet from the room above (dance practice? sexual harassment?); bass lines amped by the sound systems of SUVs on the street; a flushing toilet.

THE SEATS are raked at a steep incline. They look cannibalized and recycled, as if they had migrated here after some Broadway renovation. (With luck, the play will make the same journey in reverse.) They are tightly packed and a little unsteady; sitting in them is more comfortable than flying coach, less comfortable than a commuter train.

For THE LOBBY, there is nothing but the offices of the little theater company that is hosting tonight's event. Cheap phones, a poster or two. Even so, there is a table set with cheese, wine, and plastic cups. For every premiere, however simple, there must be communion. This is my work: take, eat.

As the room fills, we see THE PLAYWRIGHT, a young middle-aged man, forty or thereabouts. He will always be youthful; now he is beginning to show wiriness. In T-shirt, jeans, and sneakers, he looks like half the people on the subway—perhaps because half the people on the subway in New York are playwrights. He is friendly and intelligent, but a bit nervous, with reason: In a few moments he will take his seat in the front row, and watch his thoughts be drop-kicked from ACTORS to AUDIENCE.

THE AUDIENCE, which numbers about twenty, soon fills the little space almost to capacity. Most of them look much like THE PLAYWRIGHT, with here or there a tweak of race or sex; a FRIEND from an earlier period of THE PLAYWRIGHT's life, who is not a theater person, is conspicuous in brown-and-white spectators, as if he had expected a photographer. He sits by THE PLAYWRIGHT's AUNT and MOTHER. Family solidarity, the glue of drama, from Oedipus to the Tyrones. THE PLAYWRIGHT and his family are Jewish; what will New York do for entertainment, besides charity balls and the lottery, if the Jews ever leave?

Eight chairs stretch across the stage in a slightly bowed line. The chair stage left, which sits behind a small black table, is for the man who will read the STAGE DIRECTIONS. The conventions of a faded modernism give this expedient a Peter Brooks-ish air: Brechtian distancing. If this were a late play by Yeats, the reader of STAGE DIRECTIONS would be called An Old Peasant.

The other seven seats will be occupied by THE ACTORS. Already some of them are in place, going over exchanges in undertones. They have two acts and three hours ahead of them; mindful of the soon-to-be-silent air-conditioner, many clutch bottles of water. Their scripts lie in their laps, showing THE AUDIENCE, upside down and at a distance, highlighted blocks of text. The actors are an average lot of New Yorkers, averagely dressed, yet soon, without the help of costume, make-up, or gesture, they will change. One will become a girl; one will lose his mind; two (the madman's wife and his friend) will become lovers. They will discuss music, passionately and intelligently, without playing or hearing a note. Not for the first time, THE FRIEND will marvel at how much talent there is in the world. Every day we hear businessmen, teachers, or politicians talking, and what an awful gargle most of them make of it: listless, uninflected, unconvincing. Recorded telemarketers sound better. Most people cannot even play themselves in public. But actors, unlike God, create men and women not in their own image.

The principal characters of the play that is being premiered are CLARA and ROBERT SCHUMANN, and a young JOHANNES BRAHMS. BRAHMS is the great surprise. To those who remember him at all, BRAHMS is the sturdy troll whose white plaster beard graced the shelves of an older generation of piano students, along with sleek Mozart and scowling Beethoven. This BRAHMS, though, is young and sexy. The details of the play need not concern us now, since it is about to begin, though one aspect of it deserves mention, because of the light it casts on the setting. The mid-19th-century Germans, like the modern New Yorkers, were artists, with all that that implies. Artists are probably not crazier than the average person, though they dramatize it more. We will see several illicit passes, one of them caught for a sexual touchdown. Then as now, artists dabble in weirdo religions and the occult. The divine spark singes; we will see a séance. The most important trans-generational bond between artists is their sense of embattlement, and their battles with one another. THE SCHUMANNS and their friends will rail at Philistines; they will rail equally loudly against the garde that is more avant than they are, the offstage Liszt and Wagner.

What sad tics. Why spend more time than is absolutely necessary among such people? Because, sometimes, they hear and capture the most wonderful music.

The play begins.) **NR**

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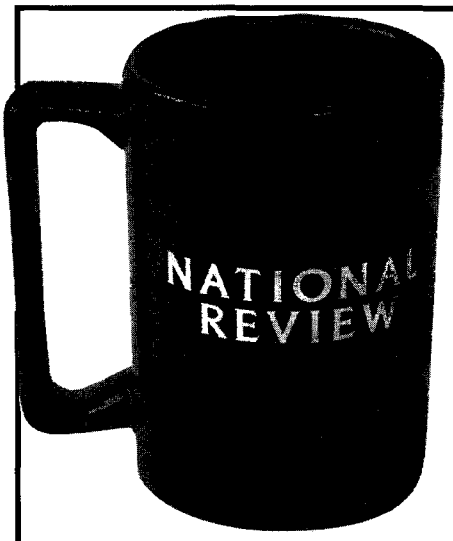

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

What's Up in the Spy World?

NEW YORK, JUNE 20

THE Big Bad Russians have pulled a fast one which bears pondering. The victim is one Aleksandr Zaporozhsky, by U.S. lights a hero, by Russian lights a traitor. We learn that in November 2001, he was enticed to revisit his homeland, on stepping foot in which he was whisked off, tried, and sentenced to 18 years in prison.

Several questions immediately arise. True, Zaporozhsky spied against Moscow, but when he did that, he was spying against a Soviet regime ultimately repudiated by the Russian people. It was ten years between the time the Russians shook off Communism and the time the Russian secret police got around to luring Zaporozhsky back to Russia. Why should they be mad at a citizen who turned against the regime finally rejected by everybody, including the Soviet president?

It is conjectured by James Risen, writing in the *New York Times*, that what the defector had done was cue the FBI onto the trail of Robert P. Hanssen, the FBI traitor who worked for Soviet money for 20 years, betraying Russians who were giving us important information, resulting in mayhem and death. We gave Hanssen a life sentence, and there are those who at his trial were wistful for the gallows when that sentence was passed. Conjecture: Were the Moscow secret police sending a signal to Hanssen? Were they saying to him, "Comrade Hanssenski, here is a little debt we have repaid, to requite your valuable services for 20 years. We prepared carefully a plot to lure your betrayer back to the fatherland and we have nabbed him. He will be in jail for eighteen years."

The link between the two cases could tighten up one step further. What if Moscow were to offer to return Zaporozhsky to the United States, in return for the release of Hanssen to Russia? Lots of spy exchanges were effected during the Cold War, most spectacularly the exchange of our U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers for the master spy/photographer Colonel Rudolf Abel. They met on Berlin's Glienicke Bridge in 1962, Gary Powers headed home, Colonel Abel headed home. It isn't often that a western spy goes to Moscow to live out the rest of his life, but of course the notorious Kim Philby did exactly that, and died in 1988, one part asperity, one part booze.

What grabs attention is the trans-ideological nature of the Zaporozhsky ambush. Hanssen did not betray his country because the star of socialism blinded his eye and captured his soul. He wanted more money than the FBI was paying him. Zaporozhsky was, from all accounts, someone who rejected the Communist system and wished to fight against it, as so many sometime Communists did. Was corporate pride at work here?—We Russians may be governed by a different order, serving different gods, but we will not forgive a betrayal even though it was of a predecessor government everywhere rejected. What would we have thought if the government of West Germany, licensed in 1954 by the occupying powers with full authority (excepting defense policy), had lured back to Bonn a German who had defected from Hitler and given secrets to the Allies, sentencing him to imprisonment?

And finally, the Zaporozhsky affair reminds us that intelligence is an endless enterprise, and it isn't only knowledge of what Saddam Hussein and the Dear Leader of North Korea are up to that we want. The Russians were paying spy Hanssen well even after Communism's war against capitalism was abandoned. They still want to know what we are up to. And, without giving away any secrets, permit us to say that *we* want to know what the Russians are up to, including all of their motives in luring back the wretched Zaporozhsky.

Free Medicine, Ho Ho Ho

NEW YORK, JUNE 24

THE tangle of bills and subbills, the rhetoric of imperatives and velleities swirling about Congress, remind us of the evanescence of conservative doctrine. What happened, of course, is that in the presidential election of 2000, the Democrat, Mr. Gore, promised he would bring free drugs to the aging population. The winner, Mr. Bush, wants to preempt future charges that he did not come up with a program of his own.

Politics that involve the disbursement of money are exercises in redistribution. Free medicine, as defined in this space years ago, is medicine that somebody else pays for.

Conservative analysis begins by attempting to trace the itinerary of dollars on a nationwide scale. John Esposito, a 65-year-old who has been earning $35,000 per year and is now paying $400 per month for prescription drugs, is, emblematically, the object of concern. How to help him out?

He can't be helped out except by taking from others. If government steps forward with a program to reimburse him one half of his $400 monthly expenditure on drugs, the net subsidy of $200 has to be found. Where?

One means, of course, is by borrowing. You pay his drug bill and sell Treasury bonds to make up the cost (estimated, in static analysis done on the pending bill backed by President Bush, at $400 billion over ten years). Or you can devise creepy-crawly taxes that contribute to the treasury sufficient to offset the extra expenses. Most notorious of these is the tobacco tax, but there are others, including tariffs

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and, of course, the income tax. But immediately to impose on Esposito a $200 per month increase in income tax quite ruins the apparent advantage he thought he was getting out of the drug bill.

Now John Esposito, surveying the legislation, will attempt to calculate the extent to which he benefits from it. Apparently he will benefit a great deal, if his drug costs are cut in half. But he will require special skills, more skills, in point of fact, than any economic analyst has, successfully to trace the ancillary costs of the $40 billion per year program. The principal one of these is, of course, inflation. *Somebody* has to pay the cost of the subsidy, even if it is everybody else except Esposito, and the effect on the paying class is to displace energy from private enterprise to paying more money into the federal government. And, of course, individual states, with their individual programs, tie in to the federal program in their own way, and Esposito can't be absolutely sure exactly how much of the apparent subsidy he is in fact paying for by invisible costs, but not, like the income tax, unsightly, if Congress can figure out a way to do this.

The GOP thinking machine lost ground on the whole health issue years ago when it adopted universalization. There is no reason for wealthier citizens to pass on the cost of their medicine. When such costs become truly unbearable, the catastrophic-protection concept becomes relevant. If help were to become available after 10 percent of one's income was exceeded by health costs, you would preserve the idea of proportionality, and competition would set in immediately at the consumer level. If, up until he spent over $3,500 per year on doctors and drugs, Esposito had to pay for them himself, he would measure carefully his consumption, and the price asked by the providers. The Ross Perots could not, one assumes, ever achieve health costs exceeding 10 percent of their income, and so would not stand to benefit from whatever it is Congress finally comes up with.

If there were a drug that required politicians to divulge the true reason for their legislation, that drug should be free, and compulsory.

Oyez Oyez Oyez

NEW YORK, JUNE 27

LAWRENCE et al. v. TEXAS certiorari to the court of appeals of Texas, fourteenth district No. 02-102. Argued March 26, 2002—Decided June 26, 2003. Responding to a reported weapons disturbance in a private residence, Houston police entered petitioner Lawrence's apartment and saw him and another adult man, petitioner Garner, engaging in a private, consensual sexual act. Petitioners were arrested and convicted of deviant sexual intercourse in violation of a Texas statute forbidding two persons of the same sex to engage in certain intimate sexual conduct. In affirming, the State Court of Appeals held, inter alia, that the statute was not unconstitutional under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The court considered *Bowers* v. *Hardwick*, 478 U.S. 186, controlling on that point. Held: The Texas statute making it a crime for two persons of the same sex to engage in certain intimate sexual conduct violates the Due Process Clause. Pp. 3–18.

OPINION. Let's face it, we don't want that law in Texas and the other 12 states that have those laws; they're just, well, antiquated. After all, they aren't even enforced—it's just the isolated case, like these two guys, where the police weren't really interested in their having at it, they went in looking for weapons. But there is the problem of our decision in 1986, which said the anti-gay law was constitutionally okay. We're going to have to eat a little crow on that one, but probably we can refocus on Due Process, and lean on privacy.

Privacy!

That's the way to go. This noble Court discovered privacy as a constitutional right when we okayed abortions in *Roe*, back in 1973. Is there anybody in the world (except, of course, Scalia and Thomas) who is going to argue that sex is anything *other* than private? We have to rule every now and then on obscenity, but sex in a theater isn't exactly *private*. Sex in a theater we can protect as First Amendment stuff, free expression.

The other side will of course be making the point that it's up to the legislature of Texas to decide whether to forbid gay sex, and we're here to say that Due Process, as required under the Fourteenth Amendment, is absent when cops barge into a bedroom. Sandra (no hard feelings, Sandra. Obviously you don't want to contradict your reasoning back in the 1986 ruling) has come up with the Equal Protection Clause. I think the straight privacy argument—privacy-is-a-fundamental right—gets us along better than her Equal Protection argument, though it too is pretty persuasive.

Let's face it, we've got to do something consistent with public opinion. All 13 states had anti-sodomy laws when the U.S. was founded. But they also had slaves. Time marches on. Nobody here is in favor of the anti-gay laws, not Scalia, not Thomas, but of course they use the argument that it's up to the state legislatures to get into harmony with evolving public opinion, and yes, it's true that 12 states have voided their own anti-gay laws since 1986. But, speaking of modern times, we are a Court that moves *with* modern times, and we are an activist Court (though we don't win them all!), and there is a hardheaded crowd out there who just say no, that bringing in two gays for having sex is just too much, and I think we all agree.

And yes, we know—nobody will say we're dumb!—that this ruling will lead us to problems. Gays in the military is one of them, and, of course, gay marriage, gay marriage, gay marriage—I wish more gays would move to Canada. *Just kidding*. But we can put that off for a bit, wait for a groundswell. When that one comes in, I think we should have Sandra write the opinion. She's proved on this one that she can square circles. Or is that unconstitutional—squaring circles? Get me Scalia on the phone.

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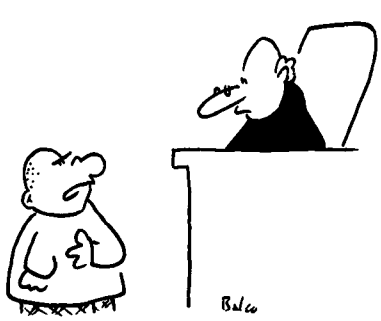

"Twenty years in the state pen?—what about my needs?"

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what's right

DAVID FRUM

Our Town

In his one-man play *Swimming to Cambodia*, Spalding Gray explains why he, an old-stock Bostonian, chose to settle in New York City: "I always wanted to live on an island off the coast of America." That's a funny way to describe Manhattan, but despite a dozen bridges and four tunnels, it's very deeply true.

And likewise for my home, Washington, D.C.: One may think of it as the capital of the nation, possibly as the symbol of American democracy, or more likely as the bottomless pit into which you toss your tax dollars—but for most of the people who drive its streets and walk its sidewalks, Washington, D.C., is first and foremost one of the great tourist spots of planet Earth.

Understandably so: The city is packed with things to see, and Mt. Vernon, Gettysburg, and other historic sites are within a relatively short drive. Local boosters call the Washington Mall "America's front yard" or "America's main street." Many summer weekends it's full of tents for some national gathering (National Tangerine Fiesta!), and on the Fourth of July and at Christmas there are grand national extravaganzas of fireworks and tree-lighting. What could be more attractive?

Courtesy of you, the federal taxpayer, the city's museums are all free of charge, so you can spend a weekend roaming from the Air and Space Museum to the National Gallery of Art and the Museum of American and then Natural History, all without laying out a dime. In London, a four-museum weekend could easily cost a family of four $200 in admissions.

And yet, while Londoners—and Venetians, New Yorkers, and Parisians—accept and appreciate their role as tourism meccas, and while people in Las Vegas and Orlando positively revel in it, Washington does not. In the minds of the permanent residents, and even more in the planning of city officials, visitors are like extras in the movies: hordes of people to be shoved this way and that and kept as far as possible from the working life of the city.

It starts with the signs. Washington is a tough city to navigate. It was designed 200 years ago by a Frenchman, who laid out his great traffic circles and grand diagonal boulevards with no regard whatsoever for the city's ravines and rivers. I pity the poor pedestrian who imagines he's mastered Washington's system of numbered blocks and calculates that a trip from 1800 N Street to 2900 N Street will be an easy eleven-block stroll.

And it's worse for the driver. My wife once suggested that Washington's highway signs should be understood as an integral component of the city's anti-terrorism defense. The short drive from Reagan Airport to Georgetown—less than 15 minutes if you know what you're doing—involves two abrupt switches from one highway to another. The switches are each signaled by brown signs posted about 25 feet from the junction: Make a mistake and you go shooting off hopelessly into suburban Virginia with no obvious route back.

Then there is the food. Washington's great tourist attractions are lined up along the Mall, which is in turn hemmed in by government buildings. If your six-year-old gets hungry halfway between the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, you either buy him a hot dog from a dubious-looking street vendor—or you strike off on foot northward, hoping to reach a restaurant before the screaming starts. It's a long, hot walk from the center of the Mall to the shopping streets, and it begins to seem even longer and hotter when you notice that all the cheap places close on weekends, leaving only the grand establishments that cater to lobbyists on expense accounts.

No wonder most visitors seem to eat in the cafeterias in the museums themselves, including the cavernous food center on the east end of the Air and Space Museum, an eatery that dispenses meals with the grim efficiency of an industrial chicken farm that can transform a bird into nuggets in a minute and a quarter.

In Washington's defense, it should be said that the cool welcome we offer outsiders can be explained by the fact that many of our visitors come here for mayhem and mischief, not for fun. Anti-globalization protesters, anti-war marchers, Million Man/Million Mom demonstrators: They tie up traffic, leave trash, and (as the local merchants complain) buy little.

But there is a more serious problem. "The most important city on earth," as one particularly off-putting ad campaign described Washington, does not seem to relish earning its living by catering to the whims and curiosity of visitors from Topeka and Toledo. Why cater, when you can tax?

Washingtonians love to talk about 'public service,' but when it comes to actual service . . .

Washingtonians love giving speeches about the ideals of "public service." Some even fantasize about some program of compulsory public service for the young. But when it comes to actual service—the kind that smiles when it hands a weary family of tourists a trayful of cold drinks or that cheerfully stops in the street to give an RV full of baffled Michiganders directions to the Franklin Roosevelt Memorial—on that count, Washingtonians tend to be found lacking.

But maybe that's okay. Seasoned travelers worry that the world is becoming too similar—that the Hard Rock Cafe in Miami is identical to the one in Manila. So perhaps Washington's indifference to tourists should be seen as something positive: an assertion of local individuality against the trend toward global uniformity. It's not a very good excuse, but it's the best I can invent on behalf of my adopted hometown. **NR**

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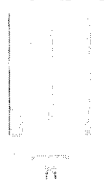

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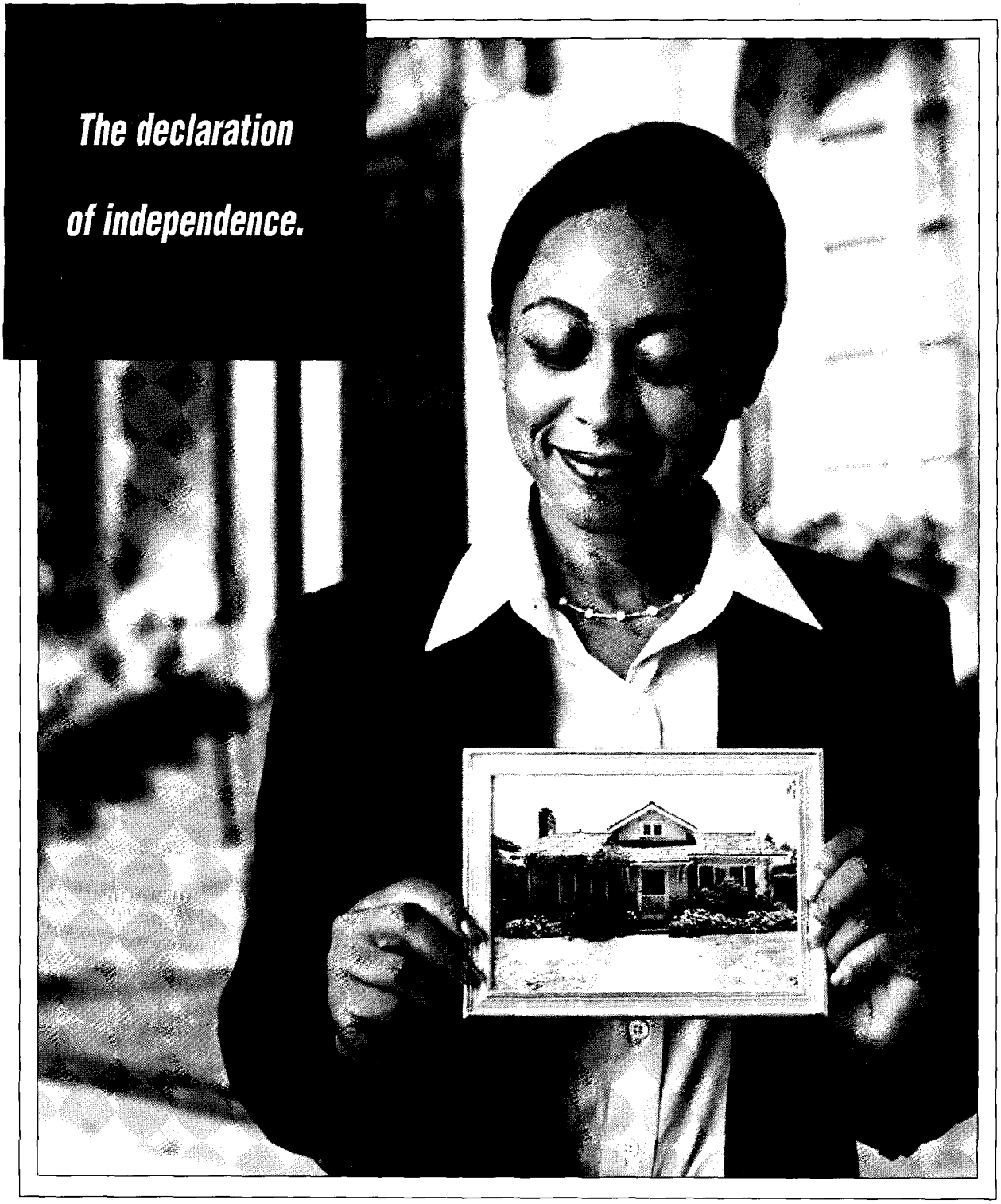

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